Design

Garden shears p.22

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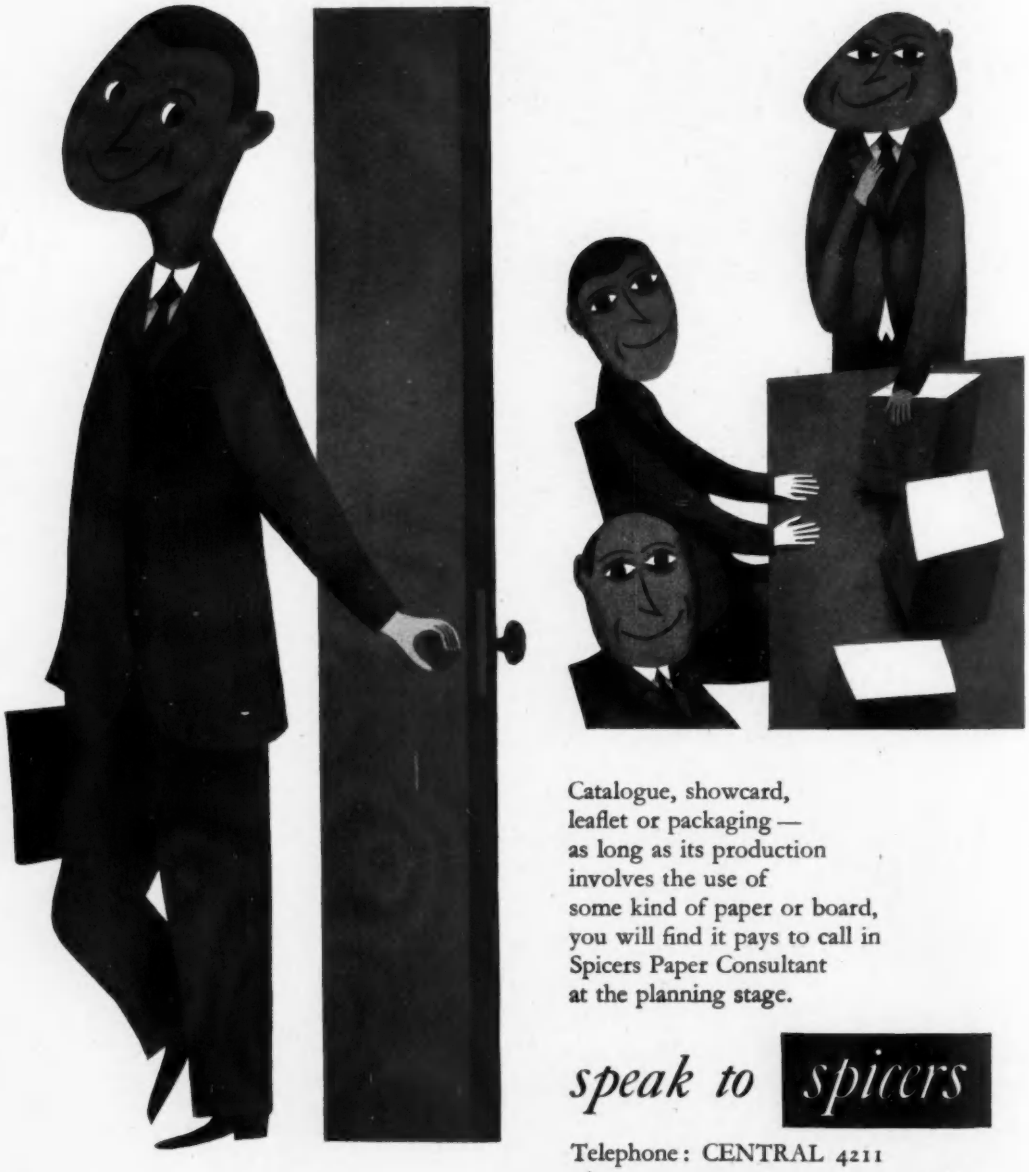

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Design

Selling Britain

> *"This ship has cost £6 millions, and is about the biggest investment in contemporary design that has been made, with the possible exception of the Festival Hall. The Orient Line is fortunate in having a director of highly developed taste in Sir Colin Anderson."*
>
> From the report of the Special Correspondent of THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN on board S S 'Orsova'.

> *"The designers have carefully and skilfully avoided anything that might suggest the time-worn term 'luxury liner', and there is no sign of sham Tudor or any other form of outmoded pretentiousness."*
>
> From the report of the Shipping Correspondent of THE TIMES on board the same ship.

> *"The stately homes of England are to live again – in Britain's new passenger liners. The most valuable sections of some of these homes are to be sent to sea in units of one of our biggest fleets, carrying the name of the richest and shyest man in Britain, Sir John Ellerman. His representatives are touring the country to secure parts of stately homes to build into ships of the fleet. . . . The Ellerman lines have one of the biggest fleets of new ships under construction in British shipyards."*
>
> From a report by a Shipping Correspondent in REYNOLDS NEWS.

> *"All over the world, taste in design is changing fast. The style broadly known as 'contemporary' . . . is gaining ground year by year. . . ."*
>
> From 'Design for Selling', an article by Mervyn Jones in the NEW STATESMAN.

AND SO THE TUG-OF-WAR goes on, one side resurrecting the past, the other struggling to endow this generation with some claim to future regard. But there are still more of the former than the latter in positions of power in British industry and commerce and still a majority among the public who would scarcely question the suitability of Georgian panelling for modern ocean liners or even the destruction of fine old houses to furnish ship saloons. And yet almost daily reports are multiplying from Press and platform about the uphill struggle for British exports, about the changing tastes of our overseas markets and the vigorous competition we face from modern-minded countries which have long since stopped exporting the past to represent the present.

That is why we welcome the experiment at this year's 'British Industries Fair' of showing in a special 'B I F Design Centre' a selection of well-designed modern British products chosen from 'Design Review'. Although it cannot be claimed that this display fully represents British industry even in the categories shown (the selection has been limited to exhibitors at the B I F since the war), it marks a new approach by its sponsors to the problems of selling Britain in the twentieth century.

BIF
POINTS and POINTERS

A pointer for buyers of good modern design at this year's 'British Industries Fair' will be a selective display of consumer goods. The 'B I F Design Centre' to be seen at Earl's Court has been staged by the CoID in association with the Board of Trade. British goods from firms that have exhibited at the B I F since the war have been chosen mainly from 'Design Review', the illustrated record of well-designed products in current production at the London headquarters of the CoID. The 350 exhibits include pottery, glass, flatware, clocks, jewellery, travel goods, office equipment, domestic appliances, furniture and textiles. A selection is shown here.

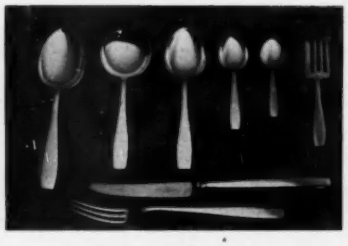
At EARL'S COURT and OLYMPIA in London and at CASTLE BROMWICH in Birmingham the B I F will be open from May 3–14: weekdays 9.30 am to 6 pm. The public will be admitted after 2 pm daily and all day on Saturday, May 8. There will be no public admission to the London sections of the 'Fair' on Friday, May 14. Public admission charge: 2*s* 6*d* for each building. Home buyers: 5*s* for badge which will admit to all sections of the 'Fair'. Overseas buyers: free.

Bolt in zinc alloy.
E. J. Thormann Eng Co Ltd.

Ceramic and aluminium coffee maker.
Platers & Stampers Ltd.

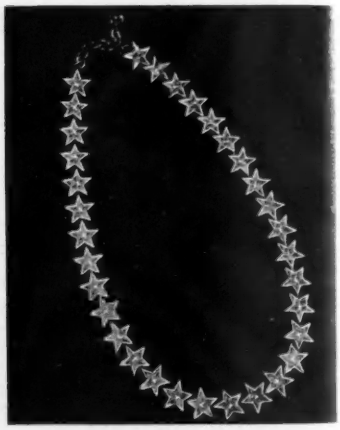
Beech nursing chair.
Designed by Ward & Austin for E. Atkins Ltd.

Crystal glass vase.
Designed by W. J. Wilson for James Powell & Sons (Whitefriars) Ltd.

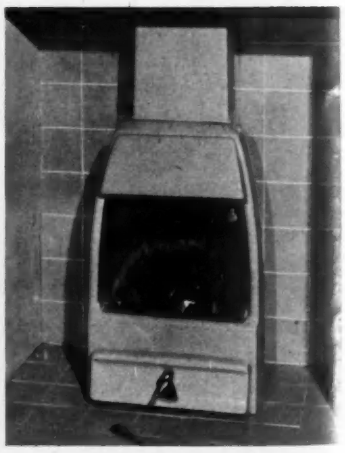


Nickel silver flatware.
Elkington & Co Ltd.

Gas refrigerator.
Easiclene Porcelain-Enamel (1938) Ltd.



Rhinestone necklace. Bijouchic Ltd.



Cast iron convector fire.
Radiation Group Sales Ltd.

FIFTH IN LINE

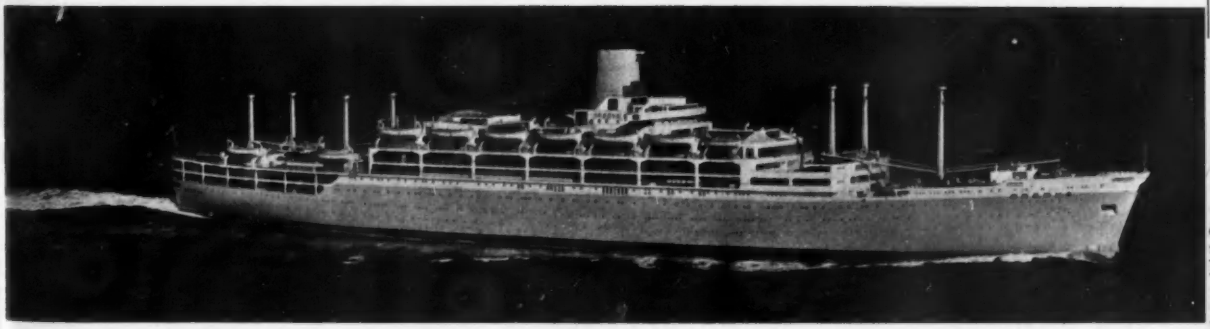
John E. Blake

A TRADITION OF GOOD MODERN DESIGN in ship interiors has been firmly established by the Orient Line since 1934 when the 'Orion' broke away from conventional period furnishings and created a new style of functional simplicity directly in key with the aesthetic standards of the Modern Movement. This tradition could have resulted only from that remarkable combination of inspired patronage and the choice of a progressive designer, which has been responsible for the five Orient Line ships built since that date. The association of Sir Colin Anderson, a director of the company, as patron, and the architect, Brian O'Rorke, as designer, has now produced a new vessel, which has carried the tradition a stage further to establish a lead in ship design as pronounced as the first venture over 20 years ago.

The 'Orsova', a passenger liner of 29,000 tons with accommodation for about 700 first-class passengers and 800 tourist, makes her impact as a restatement of design ideas originally put forward in this country at the Festival of Britain. The comparison, however, may be misleading for the link with the Festival style is really a refinement, a maturing of the basic design principles already developed by O'Rorke in such ships as the 'Orcades' and the 'Oronsay'. These ships were chiefly notable for the way in which the restrained modern style was carried through consistently to all the rooms and areas of both the first and tourist classes. The practice common to many other shipping lines of choosing Georgian, Jacobean or jazzy modern styles, sometimes juxtaposed in the same ship, had been emphatically avoided, and if the results were seldom outstanding they were always tasteful. With this background the designer has been able to develop a controlled gaiety and liveliness in the 'Orsova', more 'full-blooded' than his previous work but never overpowering or gaudy. It is here perhaps that the ship's character can be most clearly distinguished from the exhibition styles of the South Bank, for a liner has a more sober and lasting function since passengers must live within the confines of the deck for many weeks at a time.

There is nevertheless a lightness and poise in the open verandas, the games squares and the promenade decks – she is intended for the England/Australia run and for cruising in southern waters – which is reminiscent of the Thames Side Restaurant or the Festival Hall. Imaginative use of colour on some of

BELOW *The R M S 'Orsova' at sea. The absence of masts and the 'Welsh hat' funnel, to carry smoke clear of the decks, are unusual features. The naval architect responsible for the overall design of the ship, including her external appearance, was C. F. Morris. The builders were Vickers-Armstrong Ltd.*



ABOVE *The first-class dining-saloon. The dark mahogany slats which panel the walls and the red box-like lampshades combine to give a warm and inviting atmosphere. The same type shades in yellow are used in the first-class lounge and library.*

the exterior surfaces emphasises this quality and serves to give a sense of continuity for passengers who, in warm weather, would wish to move freely in and out of doors.

It is again the quality of colour which is immediately impressive in the public areas of the ship's interior. These rooms – there are nine in the first-class and seven in the tourist – have been carried out to express their functions honestly and simply. Even in the Tavern Bar and Dance Squares, where a lapse into extravagant rusticity might well be expected, the consistently modern style prevails. The lounges and galleries have different colour schemes to create both cool and warm environments. The two identical galleries, situated amidships on either side of the boiler hatch, are decorated in schemes of red in one and green in the other, symbolising the port and starboard sides of the ship – a treatment which has proved popular among passengers.

Careful attention to detail has contributed much to the feeling of continuity. Lighting fittings are particularly good, noticeably in the first-class dining-saloon, lounge and library where the problem of shading fluorescent fittings has been tackled with marked success. Clocks with simple and restrained dials are standard throughout the ship and are given an individual character by the use of the company's trade mark as part of the hour hand. Only the mirrors, with their modernised Regency frames which resemble 'props' from fashionable dress shop windows, and some of the furniture, with its slight suggestion of craft styles, seem out of harmony with the general scheme.

Bearing in mind the lively treatment of the public rooms, it is all the more surprising that colour has been largely ignored in both the corridors and the passenger cabins. White VYNIDE has been used to cover the walls in all these areas, giving an effect which seems by contrast bare, clinical and cold. The

material itself, a plastic sheeting, is well suited to its purpose since it obviates the need for periodic re-painting although, because of its rough texture, it marks rather easily. It is difficult to understand why some of the excellent colours and patterns available were not chosen. In design both the first- and tourist-class cabins fall far short of the standards set by the rest of the ship. The furniture, particularly, in dark mahogany stands out in sharp contrast to the stark white walls giving a fussiness and lack of unity which tend to make the cabins appear smaller than they actually are. Even in some of the first-class cabins there is no false ceiling to conceal the array of pipes and wiring – a refinement included even in the tourist cabins of the 'Olympia' (DESIGN February pages 13–21) though the extra air space gained is valuable in hot climates.

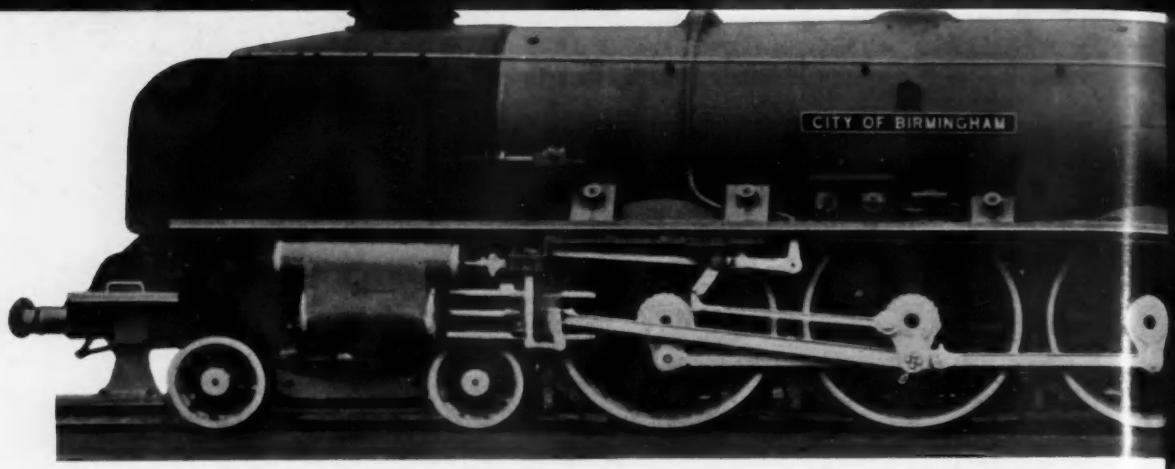
If there is another aspect of the 'Orsova's' interior which could be criticised it can perhaps best be expressed in a remark which was common among passengers – "you would hardly believe you were in a ship". This was partly intended as a compliment to the 'Orsova's' steadiness, even in heavy seas, and is undoubtedly true. But the remark also implies a criticism of the decorative schemes in so far as they resembled the interiors of a modern hotel rather than a ship. The quality of 'shiplikeness' is difficult to define, yet in the Flat and the seven special staterooms it is clearly present whereas in the remainder of the ship it is less obvious or absent. Well-proportioned furniture in light woods, slatted wood ceilings, wicker screens and leather coverings on some of the doors are features common enough in modern interiors yet their particular combination here was such that the 'shiplike' character of these rooms was unmistakable. They were designed by John Wright, who was also responsible in association with O'Rorke for the tourist library and reading-room.

It is characteristic of firms that have a progressive approach to design to ensure that even the smallest details are taken into consideration. In the 'Orsova' this approach is evident at every turn during the daily routine of life on board ship. Many well-known painters, illustrators and designers were commissioned to execute the mural decorations and to design the special curtain fabrics, menu cards, letter headings, lining papers, book matches and so on. One of the most successful of these special features are the deck chairs designed by Ernest Race (DESIGN February pages 22–23). In this respect ships like the 'Orsova' can exercise a powerful influence on foreign travellers and act as travelling showrooms of the best in British design.

ABOVE *First-class library. Dark blue leather-covered chairs and mahogany panelling. Donkey-brown and yellow carpet.*

ABOVE *One of the staterooms. Simple and 'shiplike' in character.*

Passenger cabins: ABOVE, *first-class;* BELOW, *tourist. Colour could have been used to co-ordinate the individual units.*



The study of appearance during engineering design

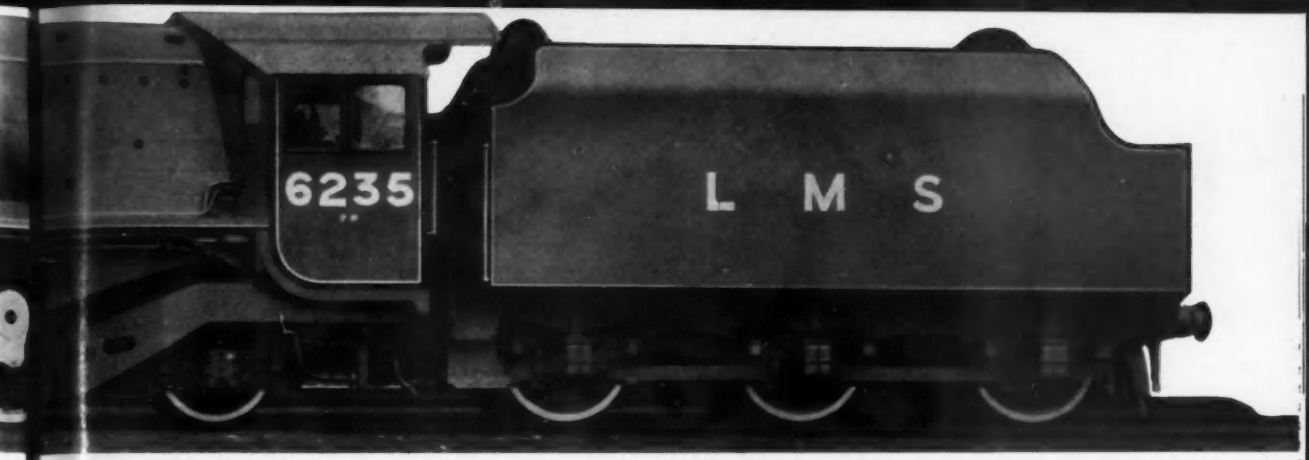
J Beresford-Evans

Good visual design, growing together with all other aspects of design, can be a vital part of every product. "There are no special classes of goods suitable to design for good appearance, nor are there others - such as circulating pumps or economisers - which are altogether too matter-of-fact for such delicacy and refinement." Mr Beresford-Evans, the author of a recently published book on the subject, develops this argument in the following article which is based on a lecture he gave in Glasgow during March in a series organised by the Council of Industrial Design Scottish Committee.*

THE ENGINEERING DESIGNER is usually thought of as a being different from other kinds of designer. He is concerned with the output of machines and with precise calculations to an extent which is not often found in other branches of industry. The milking machine and harvester of the countryside have their equivalents in the suburban garden mower or gas meter, but the responsibility for design is greatest when engineering products, such as transport equipment or street furniture, are public and inescapable. It is accepted that domestic goods ought to appear attractive, however technical they may be, and the greater public works are usually considered carefully by specialists. But the ordinary draughtsman-designer retains the responsibility for shaping nine-tenths of our necessary mechanical equipment – the pumps, valves, instruments, motors, mechanisms and tools which are generically called industrial equipment – and he is doing this with little or no formal knowledge of the practice of visual design. It is surprising, and very much to the credit of engineering designers, that their products are sometimes well shaped and seldom wholly ugly when almost none of their training has been devoted to aesthetic considerations.

It is the purpose of this article to consider problems of appearance from the viewpoint of the designing draughtsman. We must remember that his primary concern is with engineering matters, although it is a comprehensive way of thought which produces a well-

* FORM IN ENGINEERING DESIGN, O U P, 10s 6d



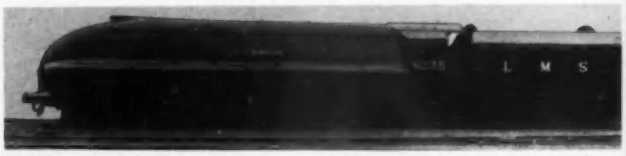
knit design with good visual as well as other characteristics. If this discipline is the right one then it is appropriate to anyone concerned in any way with the development of new equipment.

The first impression

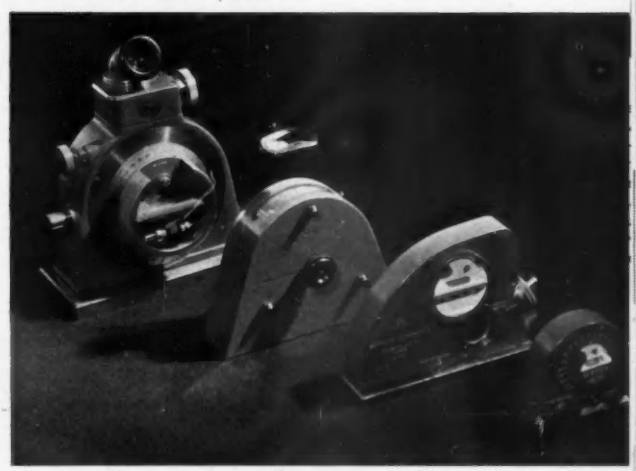
When we look for the first time at something which is new to us we appreciate its shape by the way that light plays upon its various planes and textures. We can see it before we can understand it and, until we understand it thoroughly, we must use appearance as a yardstick for performance and convenience. The layman, and we are all laymen in most matters, must use the appearance as a measure of the workmanship. If his first reaction is good he will be ready to study the product further.

In such matters our first impressions are sound, for a good craftsman, or a works that is proud of its products, will want to give the goods an appearance that is commensurate with the structural design. The important point, however, is that the visual shape should grow from the engineering side of the product as the outward expression of the designer's confidence in his work. If the original design is a good one, then its good points can be developed and presented in visual form in such a way that people will appreciate them.

It is far too easy to produce an adequate technical solution that looks ugly, so that strangers will be discouraged from taking an interest. Even more dangerous is the belief that dull or ugly things can be made beautiful simply by adding features which are in themselves associated with modernity or beauty, such as aerodynamic contours for static objects. A good appearance does not come from switching on aesthetics at the last moment, but by bearing in mind the final form during the whole process of design. There are no special classes of goods suitable to design for good appearance, nor are there others – such as circulating pumps or economisers – which are altogether too matter-of-fact for



The 'Coronation' class locomotives were originally designed as streamlined, and the City of Birmingham locomotive of this class is shown in both photographs, the upper one being a later version when cowling and fairings had been stripped off to give greatest accessibility. The designers had wrapped a fashionable shape round a classic concept but when this had been shrugged off they appear to have realised, by the way that paintwork has been used, that there was nothing wrong with a good mechanism. Fashion trends affect all products, even the most conservative of capital goods, but ephemeral fashions do not go well with long-lived machines.



1 2 3 4

ABOVE *Clinometers. All these instruments are to measure the inclination of planes within very fine limits.* **2** *is a pendulum instrument that directly rotates a scale. The other three use spirit levels which are adjusted until the bubbles are central. In the largest and smallest the scales are read by optical means; in* **3**, *the scale is on a micrometer dial. The shapes of all four are determined by the different mechanisms used and by the kind of service for which they are intended. There has been no pursuit of soft contours or secret fixings, for the general air of precision is much strengthened by this spare and unqualified geometry. The high quality of finish and especially the finely contrived detail on the controlling knobs serve as an invitation to inspect the accuracy of working. The least satisfactory in appearance is* **3**, *for the shape seems capricious until the mechanism is understood. Here then is a partial failure in visual design: the observer need not know how a product works, but he ought not to have queries at first glance. Designed and made by Hilger & Watts Ltd.*

such delicacy and refinement. Good visual design, growing together with all other aspects of design, can be a vital part of every product so that it will look dignified throughout its useful life, and venerable when the engineering design has become obsolete.

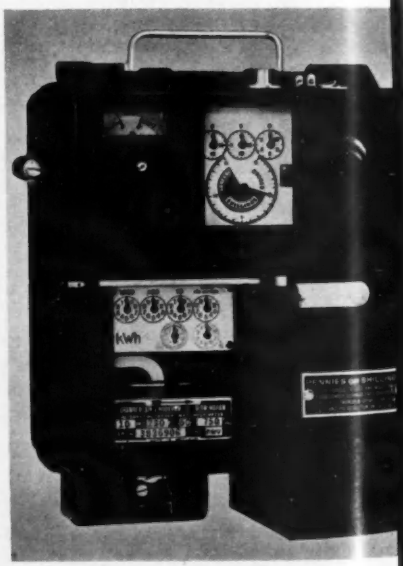
The first impression of any object ought to be an idea of its basic geometry. If this is clear and forthright, then all the controls, dials, projections and voids that inevitably gather round it can become part of a basic structure instead of being accretions. Amid the conflict of shapes there must be found and brought to prominence that which is sufficiently significant to give unity to the parts. A complex whole contains more than a mere aggregation of parts: it comprises more than a superficial shape. Casings ought to be containers for the protection of mechanisms and thus proper parts of the machines, not hide-ins for bits of ugliness, for if we are to achieve a unity and a sense of order or purpose throughout the whole product, then the external form must always derive from the internal mechanism and construction.

Shape organisation

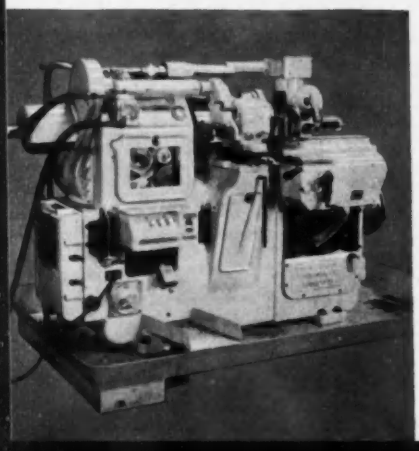
When the object is relatively uncomplicated with subsidiary forms it can be of an adventurous shape: but when numbers of lesser forms are to be carried the parent form ought to be simple, so that the eye can sort its way through the profusion offered to it and relate the parts to the whole. When, as often happens, the multitude of parts seem to be more dominant than the structure on which they are carried there can always be found a shape, or a function which dictates a shape, that is fit to make a peer among the others.

Once the strategy of the design has been established in the broad lines of the form, we can study the proportions of the whole mass and of the parts in relation to it. It must, of course, look balanced and firm. It is obvious that a thing which stands on a base or feet must be stable, and ought to look stable, but this applies equally to things that cannot slip and fall, like letters on a printed page. The eye has become so used to associating certain characteristics with stability that it is uncomfortable whenever they are absent.

LEFT *A prepayment gas meter with three parts for the separate mechanical functions of measuring, recording and paying, yet made as a unified instrument in which information is presented clearly to the user. The cash side needs no explanatory panel, for the shape and placing of the mechanism explains the way in which the operations are made. The recording dial uses a window to show the total gas consumed and has a small rotating pointer to clarify the reading of units. The general shape is simple and the user has been encouraged to understand the information given. Registered design No. 847809. Designed by Misha Black of Design Research Unit and J. Napier Proctor for the North Thames Gas Board.*



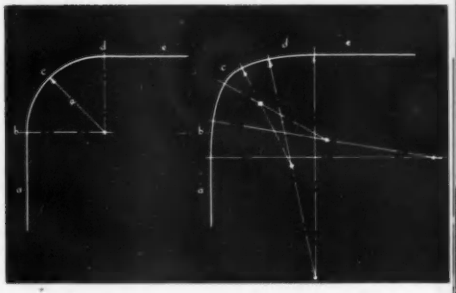
RIGHT *A single-phase prepayment electric meter. It consists of unrelated shapes added one to the other without concern for the appearance of the whole. The cash dials are readable, but their relative grouping is unpleasant and they appear to have been chucked into the enclosing rectangle. The 'kWh' dials, reading alternately right- and left-handed, are confusing. Here lies the greatest fault, for the user's convenience has been ignored, both in cumbersome instructions and in using no less than eleven cryptic pointers. Designed by S. James for Chamberlain & Hookham Ltd.*



LEFT *An automatic lathe which is visual anarchy. Each part appears to have been tacked on at the last moment or to have burst momentarily from the tangle of competing shapes which have little cohesion. It would not be an easy matter to organise the appearance of this machine, but a beginning could have been made were there a shape with enough prominence and character to dominate the others. Designed and made by BSA Tools Ltd.*

RIGHT *A universal cutter and tool grinder. This is a pleasant machine because it is obvious that all the detailing has been carefully considered. The high finish on a few parts gives an air of precision to the whole. The two circular forms on square panels are slightly overdone, but they are certainly dramatic. The remainder of the body is undistinguished, as if the designers gave up below the level of the table. The trade-mark and name are inexcusable, being more appropriate to a nineteenth-century patent medicine than to a precision tool. Designed by J. H. Wilkinson and the chief draughtsman of A. A. Jones & Shipman Ltd.*

Most of the rules of composition and theories of symmetry are aimed at achieving a balance, so that a prominent or visually weighty feature is set against a weaker and larger area, or it is supported and fixed in position by some containing unit. The various means that the designer uses to achieve good proportions are all aimed at one end, the directing of the eye in the way that is desirable. The eye is a scanner that darts from place to place, jumping from one prominent or recognised feature to another, using the paths that seem most convenient. It has a will of its own, but it can be persuaded away from the less desirable conclusion or the wrong route, just as architectural columns are given a slight barrel form to avoid any suggestion of concavity. Much of the practice of this kind of design, therefore, is concerned with setting up signposts and leading marks, and the craftsmanship of design lies in knowing or guessing what the eye will do in given circumstances.



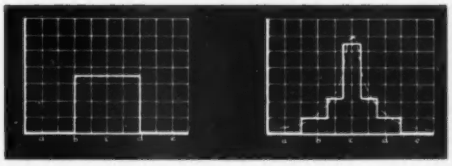
ABOVE and BELOW *When a plane is curved through an arc of large radius the form tends to lose definition, usually because the highlight is spread over too large an area. It can also be unpleasant because the eye travels along a flat plane and is then diverted without warning into a turning plane. One is sometimes justified, therefore, in making a gradual approach to the corner so that the eye is led round it with a smooth transition. Such a corner will also give clearer definition of form – but it ought to be kept for special cases and not used as a mannerism.*

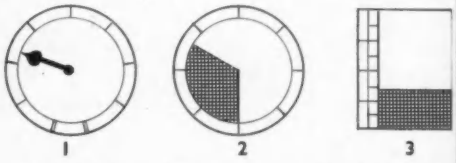
The finish

The forms that we produce are appreciated by sight and touch. They are seen by the way that light is reflected from them and this depends on their colour and texture. They are felt, or the sense of touch is anticipated by the sight of surface qualities. A finish, therefore, is more than something put on at the last moment to make the product look respectable. It is a serious part of the design, because it is the medium through which the shape is made known. For instance, a specular finish will reflect all the surroundings so that the form may be hidden by accidentals. A completely matt finish will reflect light so evenly that there will be little form – only silhouette. An intermediate surface, such as a satin finish, will give good definition to curved surfaces, and it will wear well. It will be respectable rather than slick.

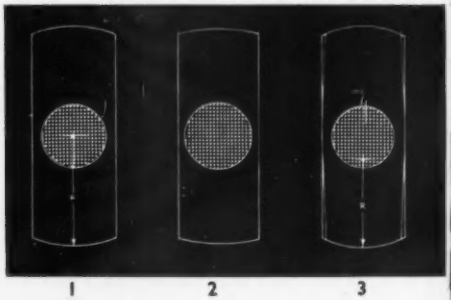
Texture, which is pattern on a small scale – either microscopic or comparatively small like acoustic board when seen from a distance – can be used to break up areas, to give interest to large bleak surfaces, allowing them to recede or calling attention to them in the same way that we use colour for comparative emphasis. Large things are seen at a distance and need treating boldly. Small things which are seen at close quarters need small-scale texture and a jewel-like finish. More appropriate than a decorative pattern is a texture, like the snaking on an instrument dial, which forms a quality of the surface.

The aspect of industrial design that we are considering is peculiar in that the work is public. It is open to interest and comment from colleagues who are not designers in a way that does not occur with any other technical function. Such interest or criticism is always important, for we are concerned with the aesthetic merits as they will appear to everyone, the technician, the layman, and the operative or user. The user's needs should be the designer's special concern, for this responsibility lies on him rather than on any other member of the production team. The eventual user may know very little about the technical merits of the product. He will care for it so long as it works with little trouble, and it is good or bad according to the quality of the designer's thought for him and his comfort. Very often the user is the least accurate and the most fallible link in the sequence that makes up the working of a machine; but if the ultimate objective is not the machine itself, but the benefit to be derived from it, then the designer needs to accept such fallibility as one of his technical problems. It is difficult to train men to fit machines. It is not so very difficult to design products that are fitted to the needs, limitations and interests of their users.





ABOVE *The purpose of a product – the way in which it will be used – ought to determine its form wherever possible. A petrol gauge or similar dial may be scrutinised for quantitative readings but it is more often required to demonstrate a proportion than to give precise figures. Dial* 1 *asks for the figure indicated by the pointer to be divided mentally into the total capacity. The other two dials are quicker to read and less liable to error in reading because the proportion is shown graphically.* 3 *is the clearer in this respect, but the quantitative reading is coarser.*



ABOVE *A shape, such as* 1, *has two points of visual uncertainty, and therefore of discomfort. The central circle, which can be followed right round, seems to overpower the arcs at top and bottom which are concentric with it, but look as if they are too flat. The straight sides approach so closely to the circle that there is a weakness, almost a concavity, about the mid-point. The total effect, instead of looking as we have drawn it and know it to be, looks as if we meant it to be like* 2. *In* 3, *the shape has been distorted, with bowed sides and shorter end radii, so as to reassure the eye.*

CASE HISTORY

Jack Stafford

A gas cooker is a product which may take five years to plan and develop, and may then have to sell on the domestic market for up to ten years. The Parkinson RENOWN FIVE *replaces a cooker which has sold since* 1936 *with outstanding success, and the firm has left little either untried or untested in its search to make the new cooker as great an achievement as the old one.*

The new RENOWN FIVE *cooker produced by the Parkinson Stove Co Ltd. There is considerable formal subtlety in the design as a whole, and this is carried through to all the individual components. White vitreous enamel on pressed steel is used on the external surfaces, whilst colour is introduced in the plastic handles and taps.*

GAS COOKER

THE PARKINSON STOVE COMPANY LTD has been making gas appliances since 1830 and gas cookers since 1870. It pioneered the use of heat-regulated ovens and of enamel surfaces to replace bare cast iron. Between the two wars over one million gas cookers were made at the Stechford factory where the RENOWN FIVE is produced.

The firm does not make a very wide range of cookers, neither does it favour the continual introduction of new models, so that the steps taken to ensure a commercial life of a decade are extremely thorough. The head of the design and technical departments is Dr Rees Jones, who supervises directly most of the design and development of any new appliance. The design department is also responsible for piloting new designs through the firm's internal organisation, for obtaining approvals at various stages, and for accepting or resisting the criticisms of other departments. The technical department is greatly concerned with the application of numerous and rigid British Standards specifications of safety and performance. They must be able to say with certainty that a design will conform to these specifications and this enables tooling up to start many months before approval is actually granted by the gas industry. Dr Rees Jones has an engineer's uniformly cynical view of all fashionable trends in design, and this outlook has greatly influenced the appearance of the RENOWN FIVE since the design for a gas cooker must be relatively dateless without being in the least anonymous.

The designers have concentrated on the expression of function and on good basic proportions, and when in doubt about detailing have done the opposite to the stylists. When the RENOWN FIVE was being developed about five years ago, sweeping curves and rounded individual control knobs were 'in'. The new cooker has a severely linear approach and the controls are rectangular and flush-fitting. This is not to say that any sort of answer to design lies in merely opposing current practice; the RENOWN FIVE shows great subtlety of form and sensitivity in detailing, but it has been deliberately placed as far as possible outside the normal trend and counter-trend of appliance design.

The company policy is to review the products which will be required in the next two to five years, with their approximate retail cost, whilst the technical and sales departments attempt to forecast developments over the next ten years. A general specification for the proposed new appliance is drafted and the design department translates this specification into visual terms. A number of different appearance designs are worked out to incorporate alternatives within the general specification, and if necessary outside consultants are brought in to contribute ideas for appearance design. Finally a set of visuals is made for submission to the board – at least six different designs being normally submitted for an appliance, though for the RENOWN FIVE twelve alternatives were available. The original designs in this case varied from rough notes produced by the technical staff to highly polished renderings from commercial artists. All were translated into line drawings on tracing linen and printed for submission, thus eliminating colour and any over-optimistic perspectives to ensure an equal chance for each design.

Developing a new design

Once a design is approved it is broken down by the technical department into component sections on which development work can proceed independently. Development times for different sections vary enormously. They are estimated and a programme drawn up so that the various projects come to fruition in the required sequence. The developments which depend on empirical tests, such as those involving actual cooking, usually take the longest time, and work may have already started on these some time before. A design engineer is appointed as a liaison between all the various departments concerned. Development at this stage is aimed at producing components which answer the general specification, and which can be tested under conditions of use. During cooking tests, amongst many other delights, thousands of 'queen cakes' are baked – these are remarkably temperature-sensitive, so that a uniform loading of an oven with them will show any variations. Whilst prototype ovens are mass baking, milk and porridge are 'boiled over' on the hotplates to test the resistance of enamel to stain and the burners to clogging, grills are left full on for hours, and taps and oven doors are remorselessly and roughly opened and closed by machinery to simulate a lifetime's wear.

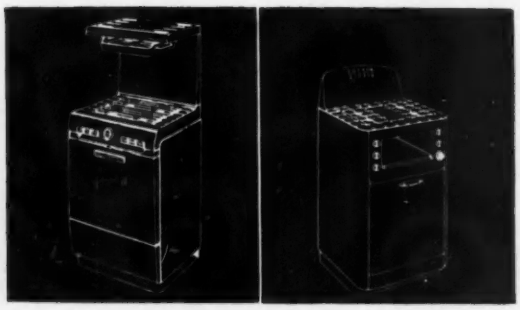
At the same time, sketches are made for further prototypes and general arrangement drawings are produced. Preliminary cost figures will have been estimated earlier but it is now that the appliance is accurately costed, and the final compromise made between price, technical performance, manufacturing ease and simplicity, servicing by the gas undertaking, and general sales appeal. This compromise is personified in a further prototype for consideration by works and sales departments. Their criticisms, and any further technical recommendations, are incorporated in a final prototype, at least 12 of which are handmade for submission to testing authorities and trade customers. After approval, the whole of the preliminary drawings are handed over to the works department for final assessment and production.

Progress since 1935

The 'R A', forerunner of the RENOWN series, was a cooker originally designed in conjunction with Mrs D'Arcy Braddell for the house presented to King George V in 1935, the year of his Silver Jubilee. Altogether ten of these cookers were made, and one was shown at the 'Exhibition of British Art in Industry' in that year. The 'R A' had the drop-front oven door and clean lines later incorporated in the RENOWN cookers, all controls being at the front so that the cooker could be built in with other kitchen equipment – it was demonstrated in this way at the exhibition.

The first RENOWN cooker – actually known as the 'Regal', but renamed within a few months of its appearance – was on sale in 1936. Its main appeal lay in the lengths to which facilities for ease of cleaning had been taken. The whole cooker was enamelled in white, and the splash back could drop forward to cover the hotplates when they were not in use. All the piping was concealed and all surfaces were flush joined, whilst the oven grids and gates were removable for cleaning. When open the oven door could be used as a working tray, and the oven tap had a safety catch so that it could not be accidentally turned. The oven was the only part in which the burners could not be automatically lit, all the hotplates and the grill being fitted with gas flash ignition, fed from a small pilot burner. This form of ignition superseded, in 1937, a separate automatic lighter which had to be applied to the burners. Apart from such minor alterations, including a folding platerack and an extra burner, the RENOWN progressed from Mark I (1936) to Mark IV (1945) as substantially the same cooker.

Two of the designs for the RENOWN FIVE *submitted for approval. One is very near the final design, left, the other was produced by an outside consultant. It includes many of the clichés then current in appearance design, and few concessions to manufacturing possibilities or ease of cleaning.*



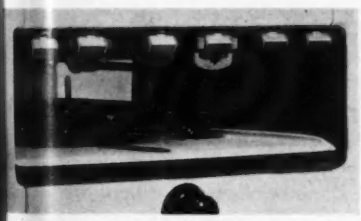
In designing the cooker to supersede the Mark IV it had to be remembered that a decade of austerity cooking during and immediately after the war had brought about a basic shift in cooking habits away from the oven, and towards the grill and the hotplate. This pointed to the eye-level grill, a new feature in cooker design which Parkinson's embraced wholeheartedly, in the same way that it had earlier tackled the problems of cleaning. The RENOWN FIVE has a massive, eye-level double grill which can cook a full meal for six people, with a decorative grill pan in which the meal can be served. It has two burners, which can be individually controlled, and two cooking positions so that a great variety of foods and quantities can be cooked.

The oven retains the drop-front door, but now has automatic ignition controlled by a safety system; the firm claims the RENOWN to be the only cooker with complete all-gas automatic lighting. A large warming drawer for plates is fitted under the oven, as well as a rack beside the grill for warming 4–6 plates. The hotplate is fitted with four burners, two of very high capacity, the body of each being the usual cast iron, while the heads are of die-cast aluminium and can be easily removed. These heads have numerous small gas ports at the sides, and are almost impossible to clog. Each pair of burners has a removable cast-iron trivet and two removable spillage trays, whilst the whole hotplate is secured by four wing nuts and can be dismantled for major cleaning. Apart from plastic taps and handles, the cooker is finished throughout in white vitreous enamel, and can be fitted flush to the wall, thus avoiding unsightly gaps at the sides. Since 1935, the design of the RENOWN cookers has made them as easy to look at as they were to use, and this has given them a long and successful life with substantial freedom from retooling over many years. There seems to be no reason why the RENOWN FIVE should be considered to be outside this tradition.

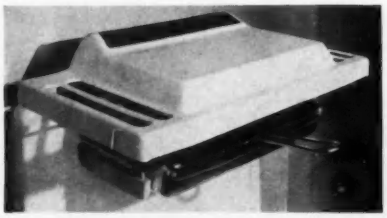
The 'F A', the forerunner of the RENOWN, *as it was sh own at the 'Exhibition of British Art in Indust y', 1935. It was designed by Parkinson's in con unction with Mrs D'Arcy Braddell, and had t e drop-front oven door and flush sides which were incorporated in the* RENOWN *series.*

Parkinson's used flush enamel surfaces on the earliest of these RENOWN *cookers. The lighter was an optional extra, used for the oven, but apart from this the whole cooker could be fitted flush with other kitchen units. The door was counter-weighted, and could be used as a working tray when open.*

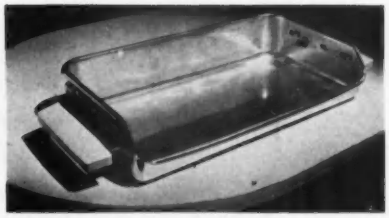
The drop oven door is retained in the RENOWN FIVE *and is so counter-weighted as to need no catch. An excellent seal is obtained by the wedge action of the tapered inner frame. The burners are lit automatically when the oven is turned on.*



In previous models the grill was under the hot-plate and was only half the width of the cooker. After 1938 *a folding platerack was fitted in addition to the normal splash plate which folded down to form a cover.*

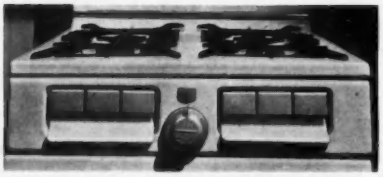


The RENOWN FIVE *griller is raised to the eye-level position and extends to the full width of the cooker. The two burners can be controlled individually.*



The actual grill pan in the new design is made of pressed aluminium and can be used on the table for serving. Note how the plastic handles can be swung out for carrying.

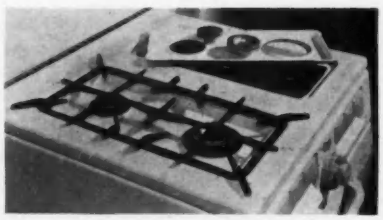
The taps on previous models gave a simmering position when turned up as far as they would go. The oven tap had a safety catch which had to be pressed sideways before the tap could be moved.



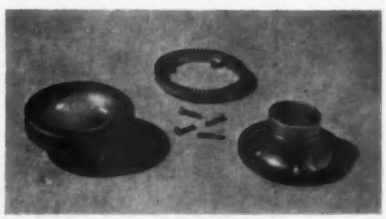
The latest taps are similar in principle but their mechanisms are shrouded by the plastic handles. They have no simmering position but are damped to give a fine control. Lighting of all burners is automatic.

The warming drawer beneath the oven can be used for storage and runs on nylon rollers so that it will open smoothly when fully loaded. It has a fitted platerack.

The hotplates of earlier models were of very substantial cast iron. The trivets were formed by webbing, and the whole unit, though removable, was heavy.



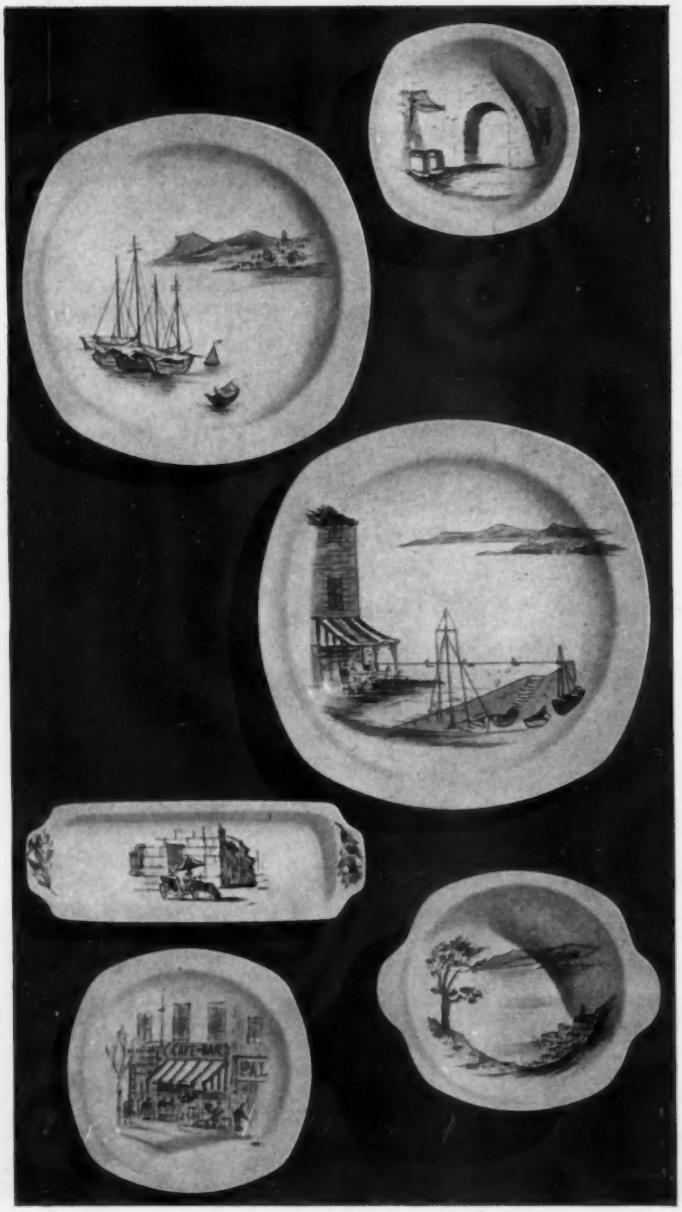
The new design is easier to clean and much lighter. Any liquid spilt goes through or around the actual burners and on to the lower spillage trays which hold half a pint each. They pull out for cleaning.



The burner heads are of die-cast aluminium. A keyway locates them in the burners and they can be completely dismantled if they become hopelessly clogged; with the orifices at the side this is unlikely.

Views on pottery

For many firms the 'British Industries Fair' is the occasion to launch a new line. Few of them can expect to face visitors to the 'Fair' with a range of designs as unusual as those to be shown this month by W. R. Midwinter Ltd.



FOR POTTERY MANUFACTURERS competitive trading, especially in the American market, became a dominant theme in 1952 and has been increasing in tempo ever since. Earthenware and inexpensive china firms were the first to be affected by rival exporters, notably from Europe, who responded to the evolutionary change in American taste. The coupe shape in all types of decorative and utilitarian ware has now become the symbol of this change. In the Potteries one firm after another is taking it up, producing its variant and then looking round for suitable decoration.

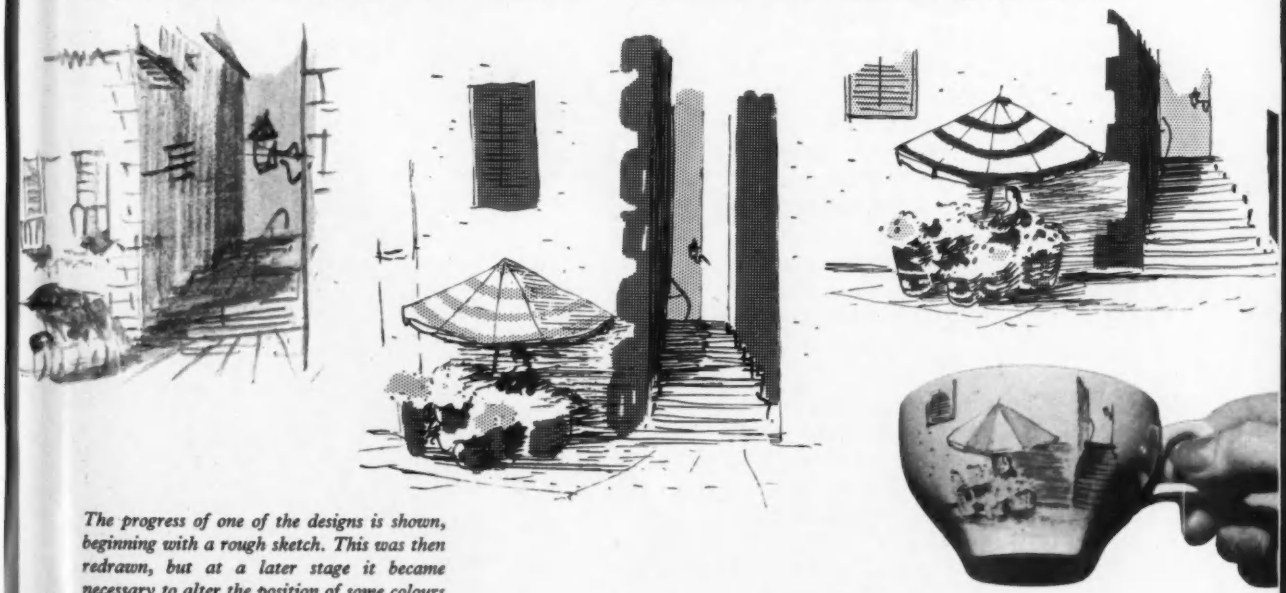
To make an original contribution to design in the competitive North American market Roy Midwinter of W. R. Midwinter Ltd commissioned Sir Hugh Casson to supply some drawings for his current range of earthenware. Sir Hugh's pen sketches of the Coronation route scenes first attracted Mr Midwinter when they were published in the DAILY MAIL last year. Reproduced on pottery they would have made delightful souvenirs, but after an interview in London it was decided that fresh sketches should be commissioned. These, in a set of seven, show scenes of the French Riviera.

LEFT and ABOVE RIGHT *Two groups which show how Sir Hugh Casson's views of the Riviera have been used on earthenware shapes by W. R. Midwinter Ltd. After being engraved, the designs have been printed and enamelled under glaze on an ivory-coloured body. On each piece Sir Hugh's signature appears on a back stamp, top left, specially designed by Sheila Stratton. Some of the designs are being slightly modified for production.*

They are reproduced here to coincide with their launching at the 'British Industries Fair'.

To begin with, Sir Hugh Casson prepared a group of rough sketches to suit a special shape of tea plate and saucer designed as a composite unit. This was later abandoned and seven of the sketches were chosen for development. Shapes for the standard tea set then became the basis on which he worked. For the plates and shallow bowls, which were added subsequently, it was relatively simple to co-ordinate the sketches with the shapes. But for all hollowware articles, such as the teapot, cup and cream jug, changing curvatures made it imperative to carry out at least some of the work on the shapes themselves. It is clear that this is a specialised task which, at a certain point, leaves the outside designer's work very much in the hands of the manufacturer. In this case there was close collaboration through the trial stages with a result that proves the worth of using the free-lance designer in the Potteries.

The pieces shown here are relatively inexpensive; a quality which assists their bold attack on a section of the trade long used to traditional landscapes, sequestered cottages and picturesque ruins in sepia and grey. The 'Riviera' patterns are colourful and unlaboured in a manner which has made Sir Hugh Casson's work well known. If they are not strictly pottery decorations – they have the disadvantage of being seen best from only one angle – then many roses and all the conventional 'views' must also be condemned. Taken on their own merits they deserve to capture a new market with a spontaneity that could make a lasting impression. M.F.



The progress of one of the designs is shown, beginning with a rough sketch. This was then redrawn, but at a later stage it became necessary to alter the position of some colours to suit the enamellers at the factory. In the third sketch the design has been extended horizontally with vignetting added to suit the exterior of the cup.

Design out of development

John Gray

FEW CRAFTSMEN EXERCISE more care in their choice of tools than gardeners, professional and amateur – and few are more conservative in taste. It takes a bold firm to initiate, as the Wilkinson Sword Co has done, a complete overhaul of its gardening implements aimed at improving performance and looks. Yet the first of the new range, an unusually practical shear, has proved such a winner in its first year that the makers have raised their monthly output to five times the initial figure.

This is the story of an enterprise with a long history, a fresh turn of mind and a belief that good design is essential to sound development. Nearly two centuries have passed since Henry Wilkinson, a swordsmith, set up his forge in Gray's Inn Road. Swords are still in demand; but for the last 60 years the company has put its name to peaceful wares like razors and nail-clippers as well as rapiers and bayonets. Until very recently, though, its only service for gardeners was an efficient pruning shear or secateur.

In 1946–7 Wilkinson's broke new ground with a set of long-handled tools, characterised by rust-resisting 'sword-steel' blades, tubular steel handles enamelled green with black rubber grips. At

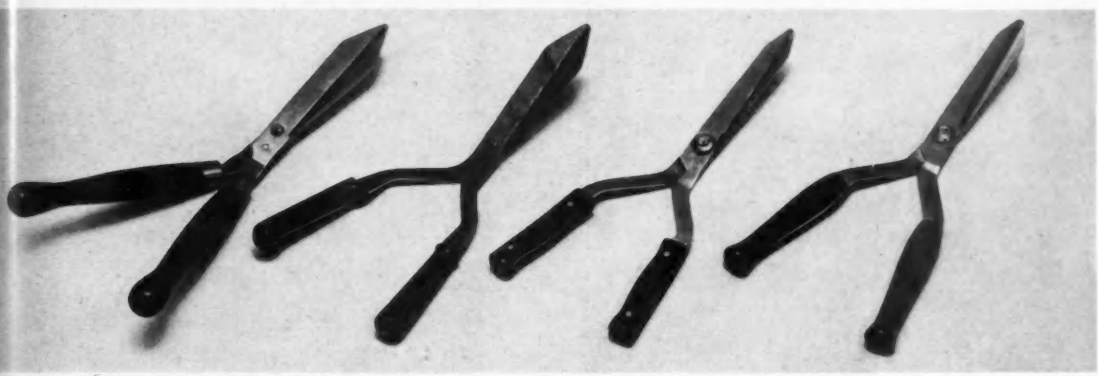
The new shear, alongside the packing case designed to make it an acceptable gift. There is a simple harmony of blade and handle which makes the tool light and easy to use, as well as pleasant in appearance. Blades are of hollow-forged swordsteel, handles of waxed beech.

the same time the firm brought out a pocket pruner and a flower-gatherer, both of simple form and with an anodised finish. Their first shears, for men and women respectively, took conventional shapes but embodied new features such as slender tangs of undiminished strength and rust-resisting blades.

Despite the commercial possibilities of this range the company soon began to look ahead. Sensing that the design of all garden tools, once thought to have become finite through centuries of slow evolution, might be much improved after a careful study of functions and testing of prototypes, it decided to redesign the entire range over a period of years, commencing with the standard shear. Hulme Chadwick came in as consultant designer, having already assisted the firm with exhibition stands. The new shear is the first fruit of this partnership.

In selling, as in making, good design has been the keynote to development – with Hulme Chadwick again consultant. Careful attention to packaging design has made the shear an acceptable Christmas present and so prolonged the traditional selling season well into the winter months. Attractive display material has been supplied to retailers not merely to highlight the shear in a tangle of turnery; but also to brighten the appearance of ironmongers' stores and so exploit the potential attractiveness of their stock to window-shoppers. The firm's labels and leaflets are the first of many printed items to be brought within the bounds of a design policy.

New to the field of household tools, the Wilkinson Sword Co is quickly evolving a consistent attitude to design that is bound to affect the outlook of an important trade.



ABOVE *This photograph illustrates not a chronological development, but the way in which three important design problems were solved. Next to the old shear (left) is an experimental model showing how a curve in the tangs has made possible a more comfortable grip on the handles. The third shear, also experimental, shows how the blades were lightened so as to provide a better balance with the handles. In the new shear (right) the shape and length of the handles have been integrated with the blades and tangs.*

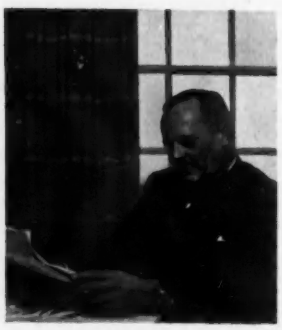
LEFT *The traditional bolt (below) has frequently exasperated gardeners by working loose. The new model incorporates a floating, hardened bearing which is adjustable. Oiling is simplified by the inclusion of a bath in the centre of the bearing.*

RIGHT *Two shears in silhouette. The blades of the old model are set at a sharp angle to the handles, which hug the tangs needlessly close to the joint. The angle of the new shear is slighter and flattens at the point where the tangs run into the handles. The tangs line the handles for two-thirds of their length and are held in position by two concealed pins – much more securely than in the old shear.*

Conversion to a modern office

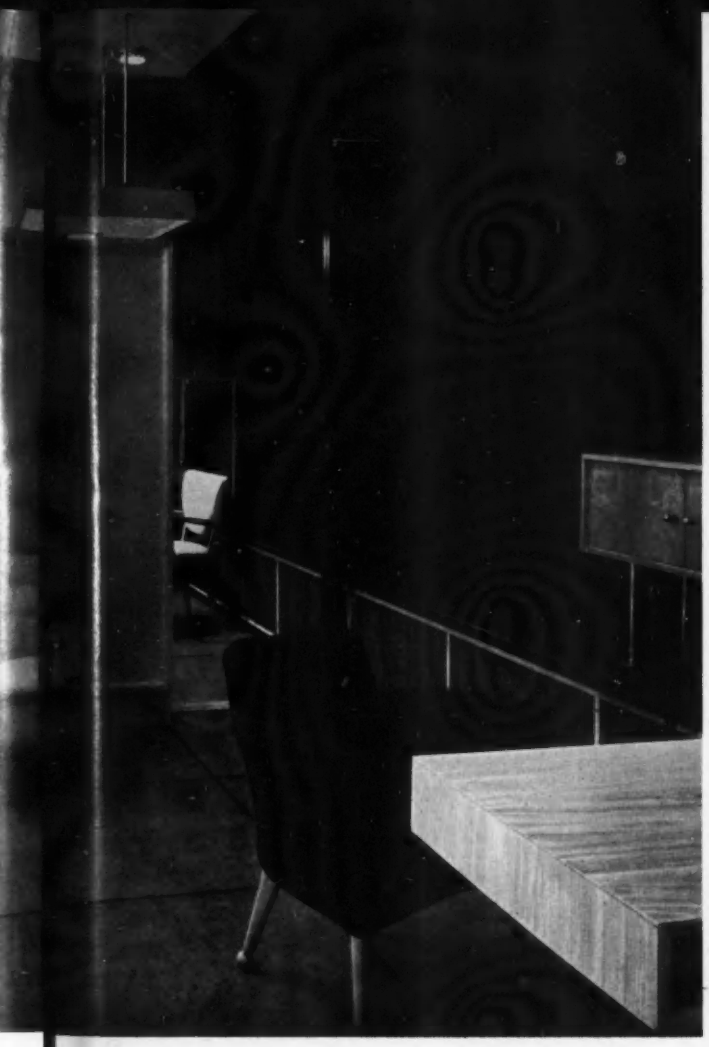
Wyndham Goodden

The principal associates of the Esso Petroleum Co have lately been grouped together and housed in new premises in Davies Street, London. In order to achieve this the building, a piece of harmless pre-war neo-Georgian, had to be more or less completely gutted and rearranged around its essential services of staircase, lift shaft and existing fenestration. Two conference rooms have been introduced, switchboard, cable and machine rooms, and an entirely new entrance, at street level, leading into an impressive entrance hall.



Howard W. Page, when a director of the Esso Petroleum Co, was responsible for the new offices. Mr Page has since become a director of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey.

CONSIDERABLE PRAISE must go to the Esso Petroleum Company for giving its architect, R. L. Moorcroft, on the one hand an extremely detailed floor by floor specification and on the other a reasonably free hand in its interpretation. A small proportion of the group has clearly preferred to elegance or precision its own backwoodsmanship: but the contrast between the results of this and the rest of the building, in which the clients have taken their architect's advice, is so striking that one cannot believe that the lesson will be missed. Third-rate furniture in these cases, hallowed presumably by custom, appears in its new setting not only tenth-rate but inefficient and uncomfortable as well.



LEFT *Entrance hall and reception area. In the foreground the receptionist's desk. A marble slab covering heating units runs along the wall on the right. The intersecting screen of copper pipes on the left frames the window to the street. Behind the free-standing partition is the travel office. The area is based on a 3-ft. module.*

ABOVE *Travel office. Desk and wall units are based on a module of 3 ft. The table partly inlaid with leather is by Russell Furnishings Ltd and the chairs and wall fittings by Dunn's of Bromley.*

BELOW *Assistant manager's office. The desk is of walnut with a plate-glass top. The visitor's chair is the same as those used throughout the building.*

This building is neither the headquarters of the parent organisation nor is it open to the public: the architect has therefore wisely resisted any attempt at the spectacular. The entrance hall contrives an atmosphere of pleasant anticipation. Here, one feels, is an organisation of first-rate intelligence – confident, discriminating and alert: while the offices, though they could hardly have been designed five years ago, are not so *avant garde* that they will cry 1953 in 1960. An exception to this deliberate restraint is, perhaps, the imaginative switchboard room, where a most successful attempt has been made to give relaxation from, and colour to, a necessarily neurotic activity. Indeed, what strikes the observer continually is the quality of thought and care brought to bear on every special activity within this building.

The lighting is universally good, whether fluorescent or incandescent, whether by the use of pools of quiet light at focal

points – a desk or wall map for example – or by greater diffusion in conference chambers. In fact the fluorescent fittings, designed by Moorcroft and made by Courtney Pope, are the best so far seen by the writer. It is perhaps a pity in conjunction with these fittings that so much grey is used in corridors, since the effect is slightly cold. Cool in summer no doubt, but definitely cold at the time of writing. It is only fair to add, however, that individually the pleasantest light fittings in the whole building are modern standards from Italy and Sweden – unobtrusive, efficient, of charming detail and proportion.

Use of colour

The designer's colour schemes throughout are also unobtrusive and sensible, giving a feeling of luxury, lightness and cleanness at one and the same time. In this connection the loop pile broadloom carpets by Stockwell are particularly successful. Accents are on the whole confined to soft furnishings – carpets, upholstery and curtains – although the insides of cupboards, with the exteriors grey, often reveal refreshing, clear bright colours. The textiles are perhaps the weakest point in the whole decorative scheme: these,

while unexceptionable, are on the whole characterless, and do not show the same level of discrimination and fitness evident throughout the rest of the house. Would it be ungallant to suggest that one hears the distant swish of petticoat intrusion here? An exception must be made for the splendid Richard Haworth textile in the third-floor conference room.

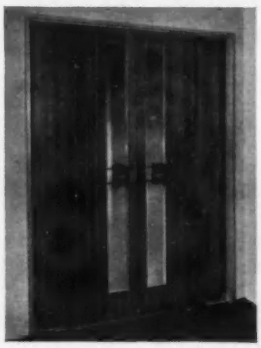
Executive and secretarial fittings have been admirably considered, and result in some standardisation of detail throughout the house, which adds as much to working efficiency as to visual trim. Outstanding amongst these are the excellent 'in' and 'out' trays, the recessed blotters, Swedish ashtrays, a secretarial fitting for telephone directories, etc, gunmetal filing cabinets by Milner and Art Metal, coathangers by Dunn's of Bromley.

The furniture is good, if not quite masterly. A trough-shaped conference table of white birch, with aerofoil legs, on the fifth floor is less pleasing seen as an independent unit than when lined up with its fellows in the second-floor conference room. Here it is wholly successful. A magnificent desk made to the architect's design by Russell Furnishings Ltd for a senior executive remains memorable. Many offices have boomerang-shaped desks – a shape pleasing enough to the eye and exceedingly good to work at. From a purely visual aspect, however, the legs of these are not quite satisfactory; the whole undercarriage of these otherwise excellent pieces needs re-thinking. Most of the furniture is made, beautifully made, by Russell Furnishings and Dunn's of Bromley; and the influence of such designers as W. H. Russell, R. D. Russell and Geoffrey Dunn himself is obvious. So, too, is the heredity of the charming wicker radiator screens, wherever the architect has not been able to case them neatly behind wooden louvers. Most of the chairs are standard models by Dunn's or Russell Furnishings, upholstered to the architect's choice; the settees and easy chairs by Race and the Story Design Group. One noticed Chance's 'Festival' glass well used in the fifth-floor lobby, sumptuous handles to the third-floor conference chamber doors, and – a commonplace today, at last, thanks to Trajan, Meynell and company – good lettering everywhere.

But chiefly memorable as an achievement are the working conditions for everyone, from chief executive to filing clerk, which the writer has rarely seen equalled, and in which an air of cheerful elegance and confident direction betrays from top to toe a first-rate business method. (*For contractors see page* 39)

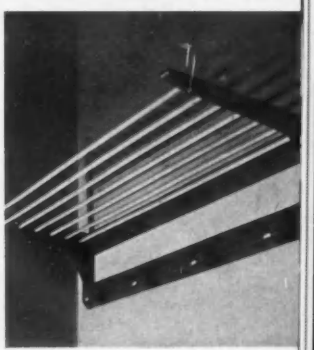
ABOVE LEFT *An executive office on the fifth floor. Light, sunny and inviting. The accompanying article picks out for mention the standardised 'in' and 'out' trays, the Swedish lamp standard and the wicker radiator grille seen here. Scale of the contemporary textile is well chosen.*

LEFT *In contrast to the above, this office for an executive of approximately the same standing is lifeless and cold. The semi-reproduction furniture looks cheap and awkward: the cabriole desk-legs left over from the eighteenth century. A hint of what this room might have been is still discernible in the wicker grille beneath the textile.*



BELOW LEFT *Secretarial room. Note the excellent telephone directory and paper file at left. The armchair is by Dunn's of Bromley, who also made the rest of the wooden furniture in this room to the architect's design.*

ABOVE *A senior executive office. Note the boomerang desk, which is pleasing to the eye and good to look at, the sunken blotter, radiator louvers, and the Italian lamp standard.*



ABOVE RIGHT *Secretary's office, communicating directly with adjoining office. The full-length textile looks better than in its abbreviated form on opposite page.*

RIGHT *Good handles and good lettering are a feature of this building. Note the clever use of the total permitted glass area, so that a full-length view is obtained through doors.*

RIGHT *Coathangers and hatracks by Dunn's of Bromley are typical of attention to detail throughout the building.*

ABOVE *This light fitting is used on all the stairway landings and is made of brass rod with aluminium perforated cups stove enamelled white.*

LEFT *Staircase leading from one building into the other where the floor level of one is 3 ft 3 inches above the other. The treads are of teak with brass railings. Low power lights illuminate the treads.*

TOP *Second-floor boardroom. Geoffrey Dunn's chairs can be seen grouped around unit birchwood tables. Light is concentrated where most needed, but shielded from the eye by concentric grilles.*

ABOVE *An example of the sandblasted* PERSPEX *twin-tube fluorescent fitting specially designed by R. L. Moorcroft and made by Courtney Pope for use throughout the building. It is only 3½ inches deep and fits flush to the ceiling enclosing the control gear.*

RIGHT *The architect, R. L. Moorcroft.*

FILING SYSTEMS

OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Part Two

R. Dudley Ryder

The first in this series of five articles (DESIGN *March pages* 10–17) *discussed the background to the rapidly growing office equipment industry in Great Britain. Some measure of the importance of the industry today can be gauged by the rising exports to the USA which in* 1952 *amounted to over* £1,250,000. *The United States is still the largest producer of office equipment in the world yet this figure represents an increase of* 660 *per cent on* 1950. *Maintaining these exports to an intensely design-conscious market means that an increasing emphasis must be laid on design for better appearance.*

FILING FORMS AN IMPORTANT PART of office routine, occupying much time and a great deal of space. In the past few years new methods and equipment have been developed to save space, facilitate reference and to avoid loss or destruction. Suspended files arranged in drawers from side to side instead of from front to back

The 'Variadex' system represents an advanced form of filing within the conventional type of cabinet. Coloured tabs are used for quick identification. Designed and made by Remington Rand Ltd.

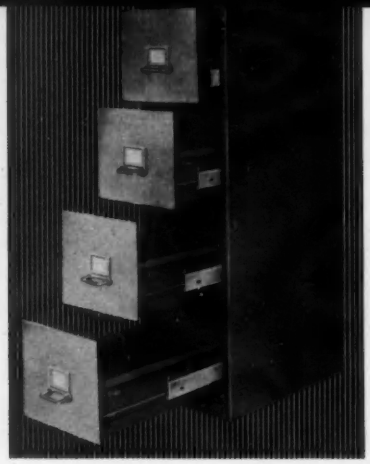
This 'Railex' unit is a development of the system of suspended filing and accommodates the contents of two normal four-drawer filing cabinets. Floor space is saved by not having to pull out drawers to obtain access to files. The unit may be closed by means of a roller blind or in other models by folding doors. Designed and made by Frank Wilson & Co.

have recently been developed making it easier to accommodate either quarto or foolscap papers in one cabinet of foolscap size. A further development on these lines is the method of suspending files from side to side on a rail as though they were on a shelf. The normal filing cabinet projects about two feet from the wall and occupies considerably more space when the drawers are opened. The new rail system saves much space because a standard cabinet projects only 18 inches and there are no drawers. A cabinet 6 ft high by 3 ft wide by 18 inches deep will house as many documents as two four-colour cabinets for half the cost.

Another advanced form of filing employs the microfilm technique. The previous year's filing can be microfilmed on 100-ft spools of 16-mm film, leaving the filing cabinets free for the current year's filing. As many as 9,000 letters can be safely and accurately stored on one 100-ft spool of film and housed in an index carton approximately the size of a packet of 20 cigarettes. Any document can quickly be located and read by inserting the film in a projector which enlarges the image on a viewing screen. Copies of a document can be made if necessary in a few minutes by a photographic method employed in conjunction with the viewer.

For records, the loose-leaf and visible record card systems are taking the place of bound books or indices. The rotary card filing system has also been introduced, which not only saves space and equipment but also makes it possible for one person to be seated within easy reach of as many as 72,000 cards, by the use of three units of three wheels, each containing 24,000 cards per unit.

In the days of the bound ledger it was customary in organisations such as banks to collect all the ledgers at the end of each day, load them on trolleys and move them to a strongroom for safe keeping and protection from fire during the night. On the following morning the process was reversed and the heavy ledgers had once again to be distributed round the office before work could begin. With the introduction of the accounting machine



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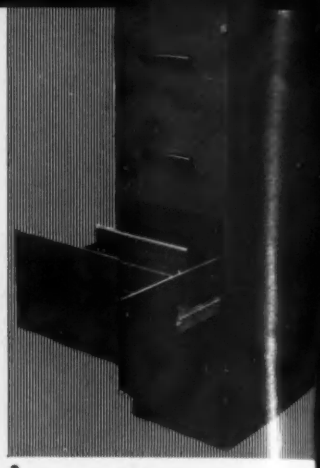

2

1 Filing cabinet made in units of one to five drawers in quarto or foolscap sizes. The drawers are mounted on electro-plated roller suspension arms, and the units are finished in dark or olive green stove enamel with chromium plated handles and card holders. Made by G. & A. Harvey & Co (London) Ltd.

2 Cabinet in two- or four-drawer series for foolscap filing only. It is made of mild steel with plastic drawer handles and is fitted with an automatic locking device controlling all drawers. Note the recessed toe space. Made by Rubery Owen & Co Ltd.

3 'Record Protection' filing cabinets, built on the lines of a safe, have been designed and tested to withstand very high temperatures so that their contents may be preserved intact in the event of a serious

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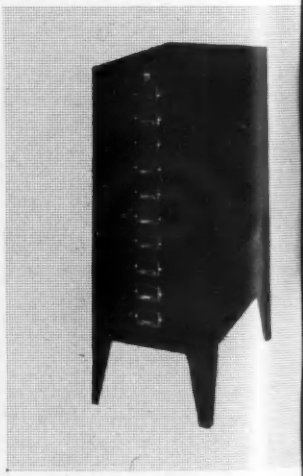

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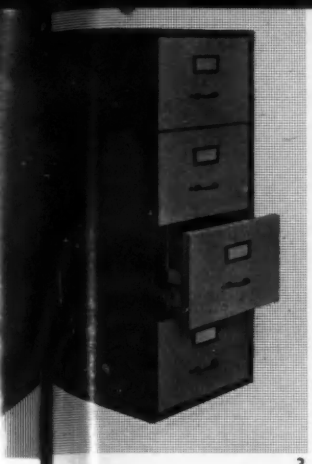
6 Documents recorded on a film are viewed on the microfilm 'Reader' which projects an image of a document of the original size or larger. It may also be used to produce facsimile prints of the original documents without a dark room. The G. B. Bell & Howell 'Reader' can be obtained from Burroughs Adding Machine Ltd.

7 100-ft spools of microfilm are placed in indexed cartons about the size of a packet of 20 cigarettes and these may be filed or stored in small cabinets. This example will accommodate cartons of microfilm on which are recorded the equivalent of the contents of 100 filing cabinets. Designed and made by Stor Products Ltd.



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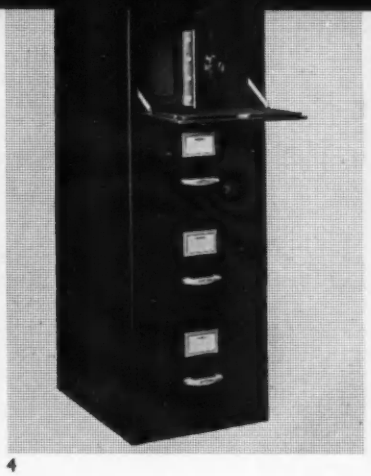

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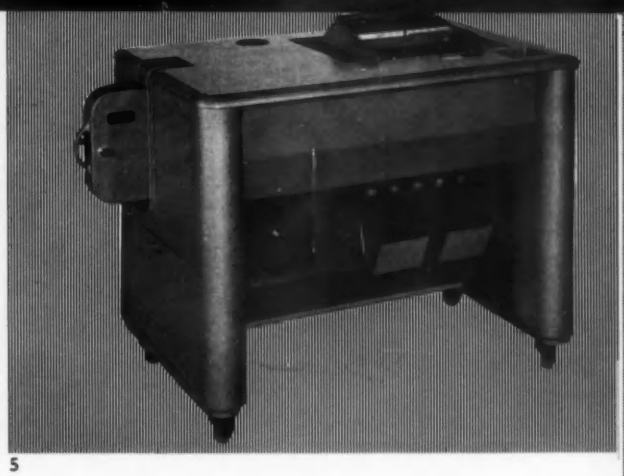

5

ire. Designed and made by Chubb & Son's Lock & Safe Co Ltd.

3 The last place an intruder would expect to look for a safe is in a filing cabinet. From its external appearance this looks like and is in fact an ordinary filing cabinet. The top drawer, however, opens to reveal a burglar-resisting safe fitted with a 'Manifold' non-manipulative lock built to operate on a million combinations. The 'Mersey' safe compartment filing cabinet is designed and made by Milners Safe Co Ltd.

5 The storage and preservation of documents are matters of great concern and expense to many firms, but by the use of microfilms these problems may be solved. This 'Recorder' is an automatic high-speed machine which will produce a miniature photographic record of documents on 100-ft spools of 16-mm film. One spool can record the contents of a normal four-drawer filing cabinet. Reduction ratios up to 37:1 are employed and documents may be photographed back and front at the same time, the images appearing side by side on the film. With the automatic feeder the speed capacity is up to 400 cheque-sized documents per minute. The G.B. Bell & Howell 'Recorder' can be obtained from Burroughs Adding Machine Ltd.

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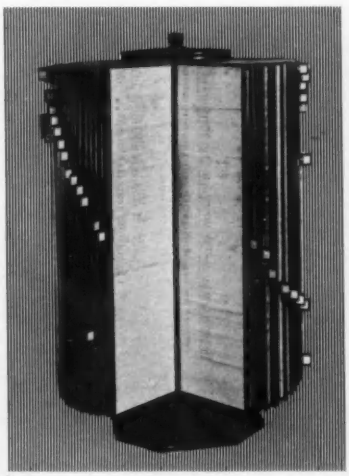

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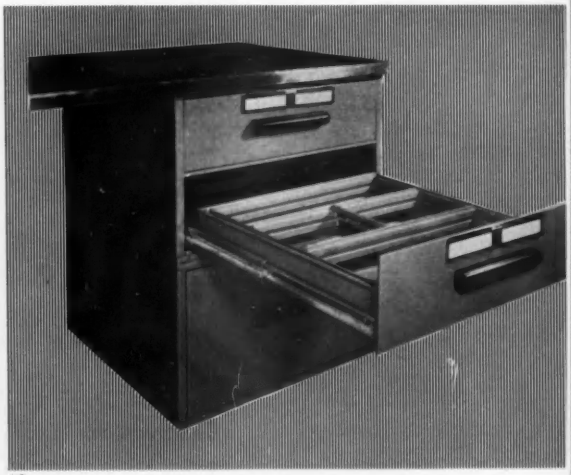

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8 Essential details and other vital records may conveniently be arranged on cards, which in turn may be stored in compact cabinets such as the 'Postindex' visible record cabinet. These cabinets can be obtained for various sizes of cards in 8, 12 or 16-drawer units. Designed and made by Art Metal Construction Co.

9 Much valuable information such as addresses, correspondence indices etc, may most conveniently be recorded in a single line and stored for easy and quick reference on visible record equipment. In this 'Seldex' unit a single strip of manilla is used for each individual line record and these strips are supplied in a number of different colours in widths of 4, 6 and 8 inches and depths of $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{6}$, and $\frac{1}{3}$ inches. Designed and made by Constructors Ltd.

10 A system of filing large numbers of cards in drawers. The drawers are fitted with partition elements and compression plates for transverse filing. Designed and made by Amselock Filing and Records Equipment Ltd.

with ledger cards a new form of equipment has been designed for 'on the spot' security. This equipment takes the form of a safe ledger card file fitted with wheels which is kept alongside the accounting machine at all times.

Correspondence and similar papers are not the only things that call for valuable storage space in an office. Library equipment and accommodation for stationery supplies have also to be considered. Some people find it more convenient to use the bottom drawer of a filing cabinet for the storage of stationery and odd articles rather than to use it for its proper purpose. With this in mind one or two firms have recently introduced composite units for small offices. These units contain a reasonable amount of cupboard space as well as provision for normal filing.

Cupboards with sliding doors and adjustable shelving for library use have long been on the market, but shelving and storage racks are now available which run on rails set in the floor. The system consists of a static row of shelving with one or more mobile rows set one in front of another.

Generally the work which has gone into the design of filing systems since the war has been of a strictly functional character. Unlike some of the desks and chairs, illustrated in the March issue, the personal tastes of individual users or individual designers are seldom exercised to give the spark of vitality to an occasional piece which would act as a guide and an inspiration to others. It is true of course that an office worker may have personal feelings about the appearance of his desk whereas he would be less concerned about his filing cabinets. Nevertheless the cabinet forms part of his environment and an item of furniture with which he must spend a large part of his working life. Though a good appearance may contribute little to the efficiency of the cabinet it may contribute a great deal to the efficiency of the worker. There is still much to be done in this respect – colour could make a big difference. Is there any reason why office equipment should still, in many cases, be finished in dreary greens or black?

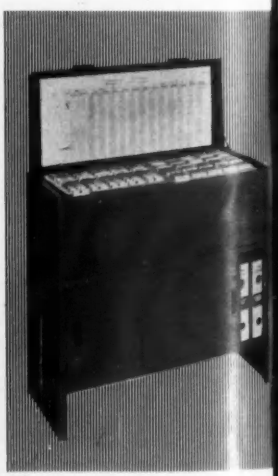
11

12

11 *Tabulating card filing cabinet for storing large numbers of punched card records. This strong and well-finished unit incorporates cradle suspension for the drawers ensuring free movement under a heavy load. Each drawer may be fitted to carry two removable trays for 7⅜ by 3¼-inch tabulating machine cards, with a total capacity of 66,000 cards or three removable trays for 4¼ by 2-inch cards with a capacity of 99,000 cards. Other sizes of cards can also be accommodated, and self-indexing guides or tabbed guides may be used for indexing purposes. Designed and made by Remington Rand Ltd.*

12 *The 'Rollindex' rotary file is a very compact piece of equipment. The loose cards are housed in separate sections on the circumference of a large wheel and are kept in place by a simple band mechanism. Up to 24,000 cards can be contained in a three-wheel unit. Units are available with*

16



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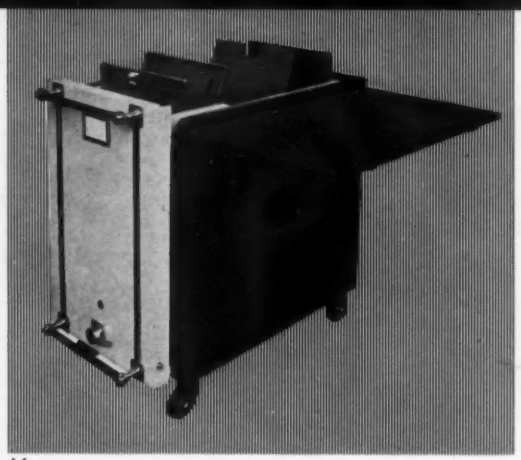
16 *Design No 332 in the 'Referendus' range of filing equipment – another good example of a composite unit. It is fitted with lift-out drawers, and the cupboard space at the bottom for storing bulky packages or personal property forms a useful feature of the unit. Designed and made by Randalrak Ltd.*

17 *The 'Ambassador' filing and cupboard unit is designed for the use of executives in their own offices or at home. Files are suspended at a convenient height and the lid incorporates a chart or graph holder. The unit provides a total capacity of approximately 24 inches for foolscap or 31 inches for quarto files with foolscap*



13 14 15

2, 3, 4 or 5 wheels for varying card sizes. Designed and made by Art Metal Construction Co.

13 *The posting card containers and trolley have been specially designed for use in conjunction with book-keeping machines. The containers may be lifted off the trolley if desired and placed alongside the machine operator on a machine accounting unit or desk. The trolley enables the ledger cards to be moved from one department to another or to a strongroom at night. Designed and made by Roneo Ltd.*

14 *This 'Record Protection' ledger file is a particularly well-designed and well-finished piece of office equipment. These files give 'on the spot' protection from fire and obviate the necessity for moving ledger card records to a strongroom at the close of each day. They may, however, be easily wheeled from one operator to another. After unlocking the lid a single movement raises the record cards to operative height. To close the unit the lid is raised, the tank containing the records sinks within fire-resisting walls and the lock snaps shut automatically. Designed and made by Chubb & Son's Lock & Safe Co Ltd.*

15 *A useful composite unit for a small office or for a professional person working at home. It is also suitable for the personal needs of a managing director who wishes to keep a limited number of confidential records in his own office. Available in olive green or dove grey enamel. Made by James Howden & Co Ltd.*

18 19

two sections side by side or quarto in two sections from left to right. The cupboard space is designed to accommodate box files or personal belongings. The unit is one of the READYRECORD range of filing furniture by Randalrak Ltd.

18 *The storage of books, obsolete files and stationery which take up a great deal of space but which are not required by the office staff each day may conveniently be dealt with by the use of the latest mobile shelving which run in front of one another on rails. These 'Rolstore' storage units were designed and made by Acrow (Engineers) Ltd.*

19 *'Stor Mor' mobile shelving designed and made by J. Glover & Sons Ltd.*

*

OFFICE EQUIPMENT which will be published in DESIGN for JULY

Typewriters

SEPTEMBER
Calculators

NOVEMBER
Duplicators

Office equipment: part one (DESIGN March pages 10-17) discussed partitions, desks and chairs.

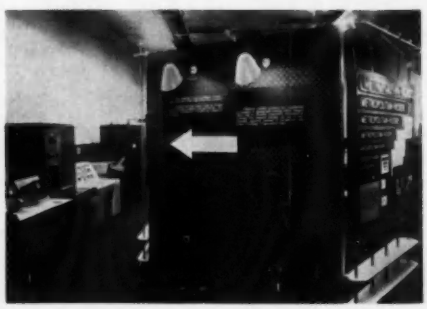
Design education at AEI

A display showing some of the visual aids used during the British Thomson-Houston courses on appearance design for drawing-office apprentices.

Two unusual events have taken place recently which point to significant changes in the attitude of the engineering industry to industrial design. Both have occurred within the same organisation – the AEI group of companies – and are the latest expression of a policy which was originally laid down in 1949 (DESIGN *May* 1952 *pages* 3–11). *Both are educational and intended to demonstrate the meaning of industrial design to the employees. Both are therefore part of a long-term plan, the effects of which will be difficult to estimate in concrete terms and in any case will not be felt for some years to come.*

The handbook on appearance design issued for internal circulation by the Appearance Design Office of Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Co Ltd, one of the AEI companies, has already been mentioned in DESIGN (*August* 1953 *page* 9). *Apart from lectures this has now been followed by an exhibition to show how the principles set out in the handbook have been carried out – an exhibition which all employees were given an opportunity to visit. The importance of good appearance coupled with technical soundness in a competitive market was emphasised at the entrance to the exhibition. The method of demonstration was to show, as far as possible, products in various stages of development: 'before' and 'after' case histories. In many large firms it is often impossible for the employees to be familiar with the extent of the companies' products. Here they were shown not only what the firm does but how and why. The interest aroused was considerable and the experiment deserves to be repeated both by Metrovick and other firms as well.*

The other 'event', which was carried out by the British Thomson-Houston branch of the AEI, is of more specialised significance. It concerns the introduction of a three-month training course on appearance design for drawing-office apprentices in their final year. Here the object is not to attempt to produce trained designers, the time factor alone would prohibit this, but to give draughtsmen a basic understanding of industrial design problems so that they are better able to interpret and carry out the designer's wishes. The course itself consists of a series of five lectures followed by discussion groups in which visual aids lent by the CoID will be used. Training in freehand sketching and display will also be given and the course will end with a practical test in which apprentices will have to design a small product to rigid specifications.



LEFT *Entrance to the recent Metropolitan-Vickers exhibition. Exhibits from the instrument and meter department are on the left; on the right are the new company nameplates and rating plates.*

BELOW *A recent effect of the AEI companies' policy is the redesign of the* METROPOLITAN-VICKERS *nameplate. In the new version, bottom, the background is finished in grey to match the colour of most of the firm's products so that the lettering alone rather than the whole plate is emphasised* (DESIGN *May* 1953 *pages* 30–32).

METROPOLITAN Vickers

METROPOLITAN-VICKERS

NEWS

Students' textiles displayed

Colourful fabrics were dominant at the exhibition of work by students in School of Textile Design, R C A, held recently at the Silk Centre, London. The show was opened by Mr Heathcoat Amory, Minister of State, Board of Trade, who said that the British textile industry was not making fast enough progress towards leading the world. He gave three principles for the industry to follow: good design, efficiency in production and enterprising salesmanship.

The majority of fabrics had an air of professional competence without sacrificing originality in design. They included dress, men's wear and furnishing fabrics in some 150 sample lengths, half of which were woven on either dobby or Jacquard looms. With the exception of six designs which were printed by members of the Silk and Rayon Users' Association, all screen printing had been carried out in the R C A. Before the exhibition opened five of the designs had been sold. There are now 45 students in the School under Professor Wyndham Goodden. The exhibition was designed by Students of the School of Interior Design, R C A.

Show houses at Coventry

The CoID in conjunction with the COVENTRY EVENING TELEGRAPH is furnishing two show houses which have been erected by the Coventry City Corporation. The furnishing schemes have been arranged for the CoID by Robert Wetmore and include some second-hand pieces to show how these can be combined with modern furnishings. The houses will be open to the public from May 12–29.

New York import show

An international trade fair to be called the 'New York Import Show' will take place from May 17–20. This will be the first mixed trade fair ever to be held in New York, previous exhibitions having been devoted to specialised industries. One of the chief purposes of the new venture is to stimulate American interest in imported goods.

Furniture competition results

Aidron Duckworth, a student in the School of Wood, Metals and Plastics at the Royal College of Art, was awarded the first prize of £50 for the design of a chair in the recent Latex Foam Furniture Design Competition organised by the British Rubber Development Board. The chair, which is to be put into production by H K Furniture Ltd, consists of foam rubber cushioning cemented to a thin plywood base which is in turn press-studded to a ½-inch formed plywood shell. The cushion is made up of 2-inch cavity foam rubber on a 1-inch foam sheet and is edged with a 1-inch foam strip to maintain a crisp edge.

Other prize winners were: Second prize (£25), D. Davenport of High Wycombe College of Further Education, for an armchair upholstered with foam rubber on coil springs; third prize (£15), A. Tilbury, Kingston School of Art, for a rocking-chair using foam rubber on rubber webbing; fourth prize (£10), S. Dysthe, Royal College of Art, for a settee again using foam rubber on rubber webbing. In addition a supplementary award of £5 was given to C. Stratton of High Wycombe College of Further Education.

The judges stated that all 97 competitors submitted considered and serious work, though there was a lack of appreciation of the possibilities which foam rubber offered to the designer. The panel of judges consisted of H. J. Cutler (High Wycombe College of Further Education), J. Gillet (Heal & Son Ltd); F. C. Jennings (British Latex Foam Manufacturers' Association); B. Howard Keith (H K Furniture Ltd); R. Dudley Ryder (for CoID); Dennis Young (British Rubber Development Board).

The winning design by Aidron Duckworth in the Latex Foam Furniture Design Competition (see previous column).

Ticking competition

The winning design for ticking in a competition held amongst students at the Camberwell School of Art for Horatio Myer & Co Ltd. Shown above is the designer, Valerie Carr, holding the ticking which was initially screen-printed but subsequently transferred to roller printing for production in quantity. Attached to the bed is a new headboard introduced by Myer's at the recent 'British Furniture Exhibition'.

Ideas for textile designers

The illustration shows part of the exhibition entitled 'The Centre Show' held recently at the Cotton Board's Colour Design and Style Centre, Manchester. This was the seventy-third exhibition to be held at the Centre and was planned to illustrate how the Centre's design library could be used as a valuable source of new ideas in textile design. Since it was opened 13 years ago the Centre has assembled many valuable books, periodicals and fabric cuttings, both old and new. These were displayed or illustrated in the form of enlarged photographs and should provide textile designers with a valuable and absorbing source of reference. The exhibition was designed by the Nicholson brothers.

Newspaper design competition

The panel of judges for the newspaper design competition (DESIGN April page 34) has now been appointed by the competition's administrative committee. It will consist of Brooke Crutchley, University Printer, Cambridge, J. M. Richards, a member of the editorial boards of the ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW and THE ARCHITECTS' JOURNAL, and W. Turner Berry, Librarian of the St. Bride Institute. The competition for awards

Continued page 36 column 3

Additions to the range

New showrooms have been designed by Terence Conran for Troughton & Young (Lighting) Ltd, at the company's Lighting Centre, London. Electrical equipment and lighting fittings, both incandescent and fluorescent, are displayed on wall panels and the ceiling. At the recent opening of the showrooms new light fittings were introduced in the ranges of ULTRALUX, VERSALITE and MONDOLITE. Four examples from the MONDOLITE range designed by the Troughton & Young Design Staff are shown here.

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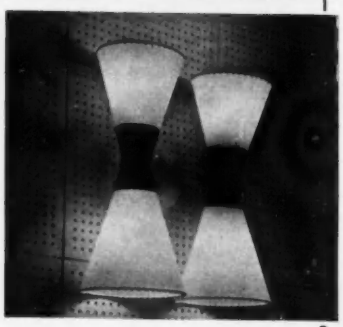

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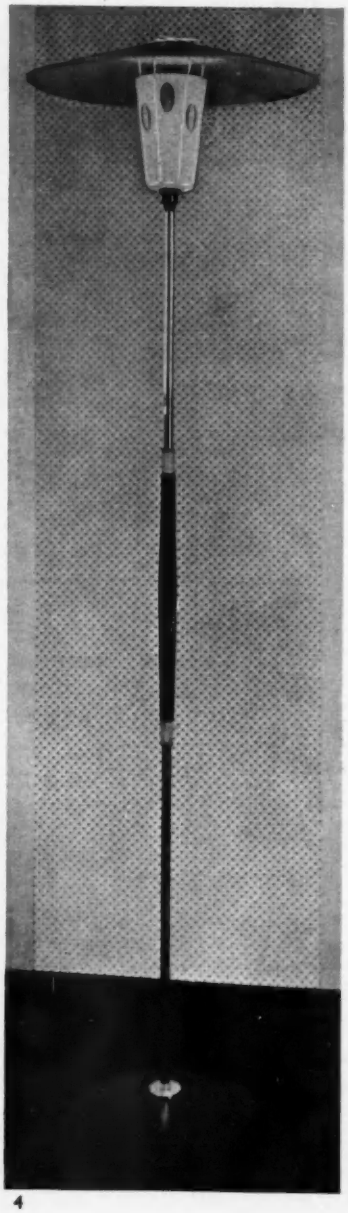

4

1 *Pendant ring fitting, also capable of supporting the diabolo type shade shown in* 2. *The shades here are of white flashed opal glass with gilt anodised cups.*

2 *Wall bracket with off-white grained plastic shades secured by metal cones.*

3 *Fitting for wall or table mounting, having a swivel joint below the flex connection.*

4 *Floor standard of brass and mahogany with decorated glass shade and perforated cone.*

to be presented by Linotype and Machinery Ltd is being organised by the journal PRINTING WORLD. A plaque, to be retained for a year, and a permanent record of the award will be presented to the best designed newspaper in all classes. Entry forms are being sent to every newspaper in the United Kingdom and discussions are taking place on the method of judging.

The Royal Society of Arts and design today

As a part of its bicentenary celebrations the Royal Society of Arts held three lectures on 'The Arts', given by Professor Nikolaus Pevsner, 'Commerce', by Sir Geoffrey Haysworth, and 'Manufactures', by Sir Ben Lockspeiser, an extract from whose lecture appears in another column.

Professor Pevsner in his lecture gave a critical review of the Society's relations with industrial art since 1754. An extract of particular interest is printed below. It contains Professor Pevsner's analysis of the Society's present function and his suggestions for a future policy towards design in industry.

"The traditional line taken by the Society is to find out what needs doing for art, commerce and industry, and start doing it. Then – that seems almost every time the both gratifying and sad end of the story – others see that the Society was right to take over, with the result that a special organisation is established for that one thing and the Society has to discover another good cause. It held the first art exhibition, and then the Royal Academy was founded; it held the first exhibition of photography and then the Royal Photographic Society was founded; it promoted the 1851 Exhibition and the Government took over; it pleaded for the Festival of Britain and handed that idea on to the Government. It started examinations in individual trades and that led to the formation of the City and Guilds Institute. It held exhibitions of inventions and now you go to the Patent Office to study inventions. And so on and so forth.

"But little is left today that is – thanks to the irresistible nineteenth- and twentieth-century trend towards specialisation – not covered by a special department or council or society or association. Design in industry? There is the D I A – private like your Society, and there is the CoID with all the facilities and the backing of the Government behind it. Propaganda for modern art? There is the Arts Council. Education of the designer? The Royal College of Art has been thoroughly overhauled and does a great deal now.

"What is left then? There are in my opinion various answers. The most general answer is that industrial art is only one aspect of this Society. The advantage it has over most other societies is that it has preserved its all-roundness. In this age of sub-division of labour, it is good to have a place where science and art are still looked after simultaneously and in conjunction. The gentlemen of 1750 were interested in both and understood something of both. It will be a sad day when there is nothing left but specialists and when the amateur, the virtuoso, the man of all-round culture has disappeared. The B B C's Third Programme gives us a balanced supply of all-round information and stimulus, but let it not be said that a Society can hand over its communications to a microphone.

Secondly, the Society, being entirely private, can cover more than the B B C. It is in a position of complete freedom to choose causes and get things started without delay.

"Thirdly, it has by reason of its private

Dr Nikolaus Pevsner, the Slade Professor of Fine Art, University of Cambridge. An extract from his lecture to the Royal Society of Arts is given here.

nature the tremendous advantage of being able to criticise. May it never be easily satisfied, may it never be smug! Henry Cole was not, he was exacting; so was Prince Albert. I see splendid twentieth-century possibilities there.

"So much for the general answers. Now for some special answers. First, we should not forget that in spite of all the existing organisations, not all the avenues are yet explored. Here are a few suggestions, large and small, for what they are worth. A Repository of Industrial Art might be assembled by gifts begged from manufacturers. It might be formed into a permanent collection with many small changing travelling exhibitions. Too little is as yet done in that way. Smaller towns far too rarely see a representation of what is best in strictly modern textiles or pottery or furniture, and the Society being private could be more uncompromising in its selection than for instance the CoID. No flirtation with period escapism. Grace, yes: decoration, yes, but let them be wholly of this age of ours.

"Then research is needed into consumers' preferences, into design and its premisses and conditions abroad – much on the lines of my own research for Birmingham University in 1934 to 1935 into conditions over here and also into the role of craft in an industrial civilisation, not as an escape into the 'olde worlde', but as an experimental outpost helping to establish new ideas amongst the relatively few who can afford to spend money on a really first-rate, beautifully made and imaginatively designed cloth or sideboard. And that brings me to my main special point for the future.

"The conditions of modern industrial design in this country are curious. It started amongst the educated upper middle class – it has still the strongest hold there. Since then it has made much progress in the less affluent middle classes and some inroads into the skilled working class. But it has not been successful amongst the poor who want the modern, but want it jazzy, nor amongst the rich and socially most influential who want the antique, genuine or imitated.

"There is no lead in contemporary design yet coming from on high, and the language of our century will not be universal in this country until that is achieved. There you have a task worth spending all one's energies on. Don't say that it is only natural for different classes to wish to express themselves in completely different styles, one modern and one, say, Georgian. That may be true at present here; it is not so, for instance, in Sweden, where the difference between the rich and the poor house is a matter of materials, of finishes, of workmanship (hand-making, for instance, against machine-making) but not of style. Surely that is a healthier state of affairs. How can it be accomplished here? Don't ask me. I only know that it must, and that it will need much determination and tenacity, much diplomacy and much faith.

"I may sound sceptical and unenthusiastic in these last remarks of mine. That is, I may say, the privilege of the historian, but I assure you I am full of hope. This Society has never been more successful and more influential than in the 1840's. It had a new president then, and he was 24 years old. He was 31 at the time of the Great Exhibition. You have a young president once again, and much that worries the quinquagenarians and sexagenarians is no problem to the young. You know that the Society means something to its president. He is not with us today, but I am looking to him in presenting you with my wishes for your third century."

Sir Ben Lockspeiser

To sum up his lecture on 'Manufactures' at the R S A, Sir Ben Lockspeiser stressed the importance of imaginative design in industry.

"The needs of this century in manufacture go beyond technology and sound workmanship, and demand, in addition, imaginative design. We have travelled a long way since the early days of the Society when our furniture carried the mark of the artist and many articles of domestic use were characterised by a fitness of design whose reputation extends to this day. It appears, however, to have been too readily assumed that the machine and the commonplace go hand in hand, and if people get the benefit of abundance they must put up with the commonplace in design. But one has only to call to mind the beautiful machine-made fabrics such as those used for decorating the Abbey for the Coronation, examples of mechanised products in pottery and furniture, and other notable exceptions to the spate of characterless products which the machine inevitably turns out when unintelligently directed, to realise how false the assumption is. The truth is that such high levels in precision and quality control can be reached in manufacture that trained imaginative minds will find far more new ways of creating beauty than already exist for perpetuating ugliness. The social value of good design is in itself a matter of importance, but we have also a strong material interest in developing contemporary design standards to match our new techniques of production and of a quality that will promote the sale of our goods abroad. The balance of payments is not a new thing, but it is a new problem. We used to have things very much our own way but circumstances have changed. We are now playing against the wind and against those who, coming in late, were compelled to study the strategy of the game, embark on intensive training, and develop the will to win if they were to challenge our victories of earlier days. Twice in this century we have had to fight for our lives and we are now fighting for the means to live. We are in for a rare tussle for the rest of the century, and the outcome will depend, in a large measure, on our skill in using our human resources, on the training we are prepared to give and undergo, and on the thoroughness we bring to our purpose."

The illustration shows the new Royal Society of Arts' badge of office which has been presented by J. A. Milne, a former chairman of the Society, to mark its bicentenary. It is made of 18 carat yellow, white, red and green gold on a rose-pink enamel background and incorporates the Society's emblem – the façade of its Adam house in the Adelphi. The badge was designed by Professor R. Y. Goodden and was made by Padgett & Braham Ltd.

Textile Conference

Gordon Russell, Director CoID, will be speaking at the 39th Annual Conference of the Textile Institute to be held at Scarborough from June 8–11. His subject will be 'Changing standards of design and the effect on textiles with particular reference to colour'. Other speakers include Alastair Morton (Morton Sundour Fabrics Ltd) on 'The designer's approach to colour' and J. C. H. Hurd (Leicester College of Technology) on 'Colour and design in knitwear'.

Designers' Conference

The Interior Decoration and Design Division of the British Colour Council is holding its 11th designers' conference in London from May 3–7. Inquiries to the Press Officer, British Colour Council, 13 Portman Square, London W1.

Plastic approved

COBEX, a non-inflammable transparent plastic material produced by B X Plastics Ltd, has been tested and approved by the L C C for use in exhibition stand construction in premises licensed by the Council. The material can be made in thicknesses suitable for structural use and can be obtained in a wide range of colours.

Electrical power convention

Delegates from 37 electrical organisations will attend the sixth British Electrical Power Convention to be held at Eastbourne from June 14–18. Associated with the convention will be a large exhibition in which over 100 exhibitors will participate.

Design appointment

Robert Cantor has been appointed design and development consultant to Resinoid & Mica Products Ltd and New Day Electrical

Accessories Ltd, subsidiaries of the Southern Areas Electric Corporation Ltd.

An experiment in moulded furniture

An experimental chair to demonstrate new possibilities in moulding techniques for furniture was shown at the recent 'British Furniture Exhibition', Earl's Court. The material, DURESTOS, *consists of a combination of asbestos felt and phenolic resin which is cured in a few seconds by an electric current. The idea was suggested by the Furniture Development Council and the prototype chair, above, designed by Frank Guille, was made up by the National Research Development Corporation which is hoping to promote commercial applications of the material.*

Portable open fire

The HURDAPTA *solid fuel burning open fire, shown here, has been designed and made by Hurseal Ltd to requirements originally set out by the Ridley Report on fuel and power of 1952. It is an all-night burning fire and has been designed so that it can be fitted into an existing fireplace or against a wall where a flue-pipe is provided. The carefully modelled case and control knob are made of cast iron finished in marble, copper lustre, cream or black vitreous enamel. Heat is given out both by the fire itself and by the hot metal of the case. A wire guard can be fitted over the opening and the complete unit is portable.*

BOOKS

The Penrose Annual, *edited by R. B. Fishenden, Lund Humphries,* 30s

THE PENROSE ANNUAL for 1954 arrives in a gilt wrapper, perhaps to signify the royal quality of its first and longest contribution. This is on official Coronation printing and is by Sir Francis Meynell. In his position as typographic adviser to H M Stationery Office he was able to bring his influence to bear at a sufficiently high level and at an early enough stage. As a result nearly all the important books, invitations, etc connected with the ceremony were in every way worthy of the occasion. Considering the many dignitaries (naturally unversed in printing) responsible for commissioning this work the continuous, if minute, alterations in procedure, and the inertia exercised by precedent, it must have been a task requiring consummate tact and patience. Sir Francis Meynell describes his journey through the labyrinth of 'Responsibles' with the suavity and irony which constitute the mature Meynellian style at its best. I excerpt this footnote:

"It might appear that between the death of one monarch and the Coronation of another there is plenty of time for everything – even intaglio printing by hand. It is to be observed (a) that Committees and Offices are not so quickly set up; and (b) that the moment must be awaited when the highest in the land are prepared to give their interest and decision."

Other articles of general interest to designers abound as usual: for example, Paul Reilly on mid-century taste, The School of Graphic Design at the Royal College of Art, opportunities in Penmanship by Will Carter and a very interesting note on Sir Emery Walker by the late Noel Rooke. The technical articles reflect the immense inventive pressure that never ceases to agitate the printing trade. This notable collection of scholarship and research is marshalled as brilliantly as ever by R. B. Fishenden, deservedly honoured of late with the OBE. The execution is in the competent hands of Lund Humphries Ltd. As usual the unity is marred only by a few of the trade advertisers at the end of the volume. Would that other trades produced annuals as good as PENROSE!

NOEL CARRINGTON

Neue Dekorationsstoffe Tapeten und Teppiche, *Alexander Koch (Stuttgart), English distributor Alec Tiranti,* 65s

This book contains 150 pages of well-reproduced illustrations of furnishing fabrics, wallpapers and carpets, drawn from Denmark, England, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States and Germany. The pictures, which bear captions in German, English and French, are supplemented by 28 samples of wallpaper.

Apart from some Danish floral patterns, the designs shown are mostly abstract, and support Professor Georg Muche's assertion in his foreword that similar elements appear simultaneously in various parts of the world. Most of the illustrations are of German work and the high standard of their design shows what strenuous competition British textile manufacturers are having to meet in export markets.

British textiles are represented by only one firm's products, and some of the leading manufacturers of Sweden and the United States are not mentioned at all. Some important designers, too, are omitted. The book would have been more complete had it included some designs by Astrid Sampe of Sweden and Alexander Girard of the United States. More examples of woven patterns could well have been included. The small number illustrated does not adequately reflect the great amount of work that has been done, particularly in the United States, in this field.

ANTHONY S. HEAL

Poster Design, *Tom Eckersley, Studio Publications,* 18s

There is no question that the Studio 'how to do it' series is an excellent idea; the principle behind it being that leading exponents in every field are the best equipped people to expound to students 'how to do it'. Tom Eckersley's new book on poster design, No 50 in this series, is a perfect example of the method. For all those aspiring to achieve success as poster designers, this book is an indispensable guide. I read it with the greatest interest.

Tom Eckersley is an established master of international repute in the field of poster design. He is able, therefore, to speak with authority on the whole subject. There are special sections on lettering; on treatment; on the humorous aspect; on the dramatic; the human appeal; the unusual; and finally, on photography in poster design. Quite apart from all the information and help which Tom Eckersley gives to the reader, his book contains a unique cross-section of international poster design, so that even for established designers who may feel they require no further tuition, this volume is a valuable addition to their library.

However much one admires a work of design, it is often difficult to probe into its qualities so that one's own enthusiasm can be communicated to others. Eckersley, in addition to being an inventor of brilliant poster designs himself, certainly has the gift of analysing the work of his peers in the international field in a truly searching manner. As a result, the student who studies this book carefully will be given a constructive analysis of the virtues underlying many of the well-known international poster designs. This should prove of invaluable help to him and give an added confidence to approach his career as a poster designer with the maturity which he would otherwise have difficulty in acquiring.

ASHLEY HAVINDEN

Art and Industry, *Herbert Read, new and revised edition, Faber & Faber,* 25s

Although first published in 1934, this book is still, even without the revisions of the new edition, the only really comprehensive and authoritative work on the principles of industrial design.

With great scholarship, the historical background of the subject is established and the fundamental problems of achieving aesthetic expression in machine production are analysed with remarkable clarity.

In the section 'Form', design considerations are lucidly examined in relation to the characteristics of materials, and the following section, 'Colour and Ornament', deals conclusively with the much debated question of decoration in contemporary design. The final and perhaps most important section, 'Education in the Industrial Age', proposes radical reforms in education at all age levels, with convincing arguments that the training of the senses is essential to human progress and happiness.

There are a number of new illustrations of more-up-to-date productions in this edition and sections on leatherwork and packaging have been added.

At a time when so many people are over-anxious about new developments of the modern 'style', as if they were bored with a universal and mature era of good design, it is interesting to read Sir Herbert Read's view

that the modern movement is still in its infancy and that the struggle for better standards has scarcely gained ground since the last edition of the book ten years ago.

In spite of some new photographs, I feel that on the whole the illustrations do not do justice to the very considerable refinements of function and appearance which in limited instances have occurred within a few industries in the post-war years. Thus several photographs, while showing historically important examples of modern design, do not represent the best in these fields. The Aalto chairs no longer conform to present standards of comfort obtainable from moulded ply, and the forms of the early Chermayeff radio cabinet suggest fabrication from sheet material rather than the moulding of plastic, which has been better expressed in some more recent designs.

However, it is perhaps carping to make such criticisms of this important book, and one must hope that it will be widely read by industrialists, artists, educationists and indeed by all those whose pressing responsibility it is to restore order and beauty into modern society. ROBIN DAY

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See pages 24–28.

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Corrections

DESIGN April page 25. The manufacturers of the caravans in illustrations 4 and 5 were given incorrectly. The captions to these illustrations, reproduced above, should have read:

LEFT *Single panel beaten sections at the forward and rear ends allow the line of the roof to be continued without interruption.* Maker: M. R. Pascall Ltd. RIGHT *Pressed metal roof corner pieces allow curves of a generous radius along the edges and contribute to the shell strength.* Maker: Rollalong Ltd.

DESIGN March page 7: The chair in the foreground of the illustration was designed by W. H. Russell for Gordon Russell Ltd and not by Charles Kenrick.

Designers in this issue

Misha Black, OBE, FSIA, M Inst RA (DRU) (14). Robert Cantor, MSIA (37). Sir Hugh Casson, RDI, MA, FRIBA, FSIA (20). Hulme Chadwick, ARCA, FSIA (23). Robin Day, ARCA, FSIA (39), Geoffrey Dunn (27, 28). Tom Eckersley, OBE, FSIA (38). R. Y. Goodden, RDI, AA Dipl, ARIBA, FSIA (37). Frank Guille, Des RCA (38). Ashley Havinden, OBE, RDI, FSIA, FIPA (38). S. James (14). Dr A. Rees Jones (17). Sir Francis Meynell, RDI (38). R. L. Moorcroft, DA (Manc), ARIBA (24, 28). Alastair Morton FSIA (37). Robert Nicholson, MSIA (35). Roger Nicholson, ARCA, MSIA (35). Brian O'Rorke, ARA, FRIBA (9). Ernest Race, RDI, FSIA (11). R. D. Russell, RDI, FSIA (27). W. H. Russell, FSIA (27). Sheila Stratton, ARCA (20). Ward & Austin (8). Robert Wetmore, MSIA (35). J. H. Wilkinson (14). W. J. Wilson, MSIA (8). John Wright, ARIBA, AA Dipl (Hons).

Designers' addresses may be obtained from the EDITOR.

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